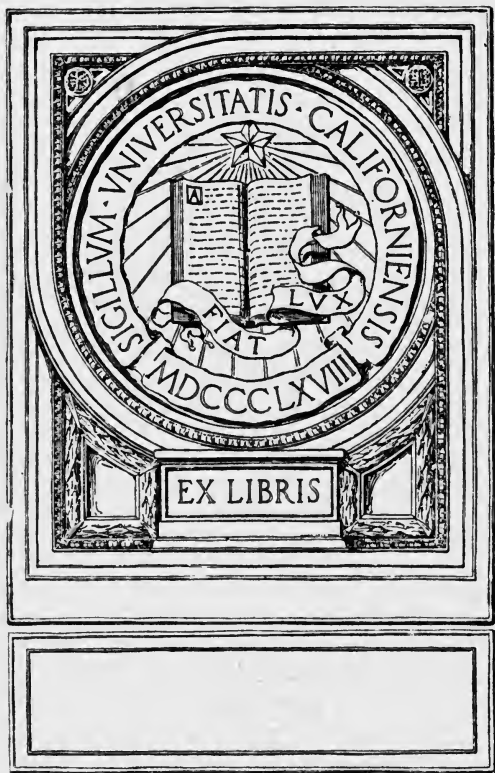


In A  
New Century

by  
Edward Sandford Martin

1C149285













# IN A NEW CENTURY

BY

EDWARD SANDFORD MARTIN

AUTHOR OF "A LITTLE BROTHER OF THE RICH," "WINDFALLS OF  
OBSERVATION," "THE LUXURY OF CHILDREN," "THE  
COURTSHIP OF A CAREFUL MAN," ETC.

LIBRARY OF  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK  
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS  
1908

*Copyright, 1908, by Charles Scribner's Sons*

*Published, September, 1908*



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
TOO MUCH SUCCESS . . . . .	1
PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS . . . . .	23
READING . . . . .	38
WRITING . . . . .	53
EXCLUSIVENESS . . . . .	77
THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIVING ON ANYTHING A YEAR	95
RICHES . . . . .	109
CHARACTER AND MONEY . . . . .	134
THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY . . . . .	149
NOISE AND CANNED FOOD . . . . .	162
DIVORCE . . . . .	177
THE PROSPECTS OF "SOCIETY" IN AMERICA . . .	192
SUMMER . . . . .	207
CONVICTIONS . . . . .	221
SPECULATION . . . . .	238
IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY? . . . . .	251

## CONTENTS

SOME ADVANTAGES OF THE COMMON LOT . . . .	271
WOMAN SUFFRAGE . . . . .	285
THE SEASHORE . . . . .	300
THE HABITS OF THE SEA . . . . .	316
DEAFNESS . . . . .	334
THE QUONDAM CLUB . . . . .	349

IN A NEW CENTURY





## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

THE fortunate people—the truly fortunate—are not so much those who succeed in life as those who succeed in living. There are some who do both; many who do neither, and some who do either one, but not the other. Success in life, so called, can be overdone, but hardly success in living. It seems possible to succeed too much in various lines of attainment, legitimate and sincerely profitable in themselves, but success in living involves getting the most out of life, not in a day or a year or a decade, but in a lifetime. That involves living wisely, and you can't live too wisely. If you could, and did, it would be un wisdom, and that would be a contradiction in terms.

Of course, succeeding too much is not, and is not likely to be, a common mistake. Comparatively few people ever get

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

a chance to fall into it. The great majority of adventurers don't succeed enough. To succeed notably calls for qualities that are rare; very valuable qualities, most of them. Yet there are familiar cases of success so commonly held to have been overdone that consideration of them will at least be helpful to discussion. The basis of the prevailing jealousy of trusts and corporations is the feeling that some of them have succeeded too much. Those that have failed—a great number—have not excited jealousy. They have merely brought sorrow to their stockholders.

In particular, there is one great and conspicuous corporation that set out years ago to succeed in business, and managed its concerns with such energy and sagacity as to make its methods a model for its rivals and neighbours, and its name the very synonym for success in trade. The man who managed it showed a genius for business. The associates whom he

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

chose were almost without exception able, self-controlled, decent-living men; astute adventurers and tireless workers. The leader was indomitable and insatiate. No degree of success in the field he had chosen satisfied him so long as any further degree was imaginably possible. No measure of commercial success that had ever before been set served as the limit to his aspirations. He aimed to get all there was in the business without concern whether there would be anything left in it for anybody else, or for what anybody before him had been satisfied to get out of any business. An ambitious person, certainly. His methods need not here be discussed—whether they were lawful according to the laws of their time, whether they were moral according to the business standards of their day, whether they were unwarrantably ruthless. There was no question of their effectiveness, for by them he succeeded in his aims to a degree

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

unmatched in familiar history. He enriched himself preposterously, enriched also every one who cast his lot in with him and left it there, and made the corporation of which his spirit was the soul the most remarkable—perhaps the greatest—business concern in the world.

Get away now from the personality of this man of commercial genius and consider merely his corporation. Did it succeed too much? There are, no doubt, gospel and philosophical reasons for saying that it did, but pass them by as inapplicable to a corporation. There is no certain indication of oversuccess in the mere possession by its shareholders of embarrassing riches. There may be such a thing as too much money, and some of them may suffer from it, but all that is hopelessly debatable. The corporation money may not be worth to some of its possessors all that it has cost; less at less cost might, and probably would, have left

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

some of them in a better case to pursue happiness, but that, too, is too large and vague a field to wander in. It seems more to the point to suggest that when the corporation succeeded so much as to disturb the balance of things, and imperil the stability of that attitude of the public mind on which its own permanent prosperity as a corporation depended, it crossed the safety line. This happened when it had succeeded so profusely, and left so many crushed and yelling competitors squirming in its wake, as to force it upon the attention of the more thoughtful of the half-admiring, half-deprecating spectators, that like success, procured by like methods by a few score of other corporations in other lines of business, would leave the population of the United States in bondage to monopolies. Then the spectators began to suspect that it had succeeded to a degree that threatened the commercial, and, indirectly, the politi-

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

cal, liberties of the people, and in that suspicion there were the seeds of discomfort for that corporation. It seems then a purely secular and material opinion that when its success had made (or seemed to make) compulsory its own restriction, the prohibition for the future of some of the methods it had grown by, and the curbing of its imitators, it had gone somewhat too far. It had achieved a prodigious, a monstrous, success in life, but, even for a corporation, a dangerously imperfect success in living.

Take another case.

It is admitted that a lively interest in athletics is very good for the young men in the colleges, and that it is important that it should be as widely diffused among them as possible. It is good for them to play together; good for them physically, socially and morally, and the good of it is recognized in all the more favour-

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

ably situated colleges by ample, and often costly, provision of boat-houses, and broad fields for football, baseball and all the other out-door sports. Almost every college president would be glad to have every one of his young men devote a part of every working day to some lively out-of-door sport. The open-air exercise is good for them, and the democratic influence of games and physical contests is excellent. And as competition is the life of trade, so from the first it has been recognized as the life of college sport; so that the contests between the colleges that began in this country—more than half a century ago—with a boat-race between Yale and Harvard, came about naturally, and have extended to practically all the colleges, and to nearly all the sports in which undergraduates engage. But the colleges have rapidly increased in numbers, and have kept growing bigger and bigger, and the contests between them

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

have multiplied and every year gained in importance, and interested more and more spectators, until conservative observers now complain that these competitions have lost their original and true function of encouraging undergraduates to take wholesome exercise and have wholesome fun, and tend rather to confine the active participation in athletics to a comparatively small body of undergraduate specialists who excel in them, and who are constrained to devote to them a good deal more time and energy than they can spare. This seems to be particularly true of foot-ball, which, though a valuable fall sport in a great number of schools, public and private, all over the country, seems in the colleges to have become chiefly valuable as a means of advertisement.

Let us try to see what has happened to intercollegiate athletics to make such allegations as this seem reasonable.



## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

There is a maxim to the effect that a thing that is worth doing at all is worth doing as well as you can. It is as handsome and engaging a maxim as there is in the book, and has the complexion of self-evident truth all over it. Nevertheless it isn't so. There is a large abundance of things worth doing and necessary to do, and for each individual there are only a select few things that are worth doing as well as he can. The rest are only worth doing as well as he can afford to do them—as well as he can do them in the time, and with the strength, that more important concerns permit him to spare to them. The trouble with intercollegiate athletics, and especially with football, about which there is the most complaint, has been this mistaken overurgency of nearly all the colleges to do them as well as they possibly could, regardless of the claims of matters more important.

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

Take, for example, a college of notable distinction in sports, which has not been content to be in intercollegiate athletics merely for her health and incidental glory, but has thought it very important to be pre-eminent, and to that end has put her mind to excellent purpose in the work of organizing victory. Feeling that whatever she did was worth doing as well as she could, she has done her very best in athletics, and with magnificent results so far as winning goes. Not much sound complaint can be made about her methods—which are admirably effective—except perhaps this general one—if even this is sound—that she has, perhaps, been willing to pay more for success in athletics than it was worth, and has constrained the colleges that competed with her to pay, if they could, the same price that she did, under penalty of being beaten nine-tenths of the time.

I don't know that any of her competi-

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

tors except one has ever shown any special reluctance to pay anything possible for athletic success, but one of them in a half-hearted way has hung back with some obstinacy from paying the price of victory. This one has not wanted professional coaches, nor unduly protracted periods of preparation. She has wanted to take sport a little easier, spread it out a little thinner and wider, keep it on a lower level of execution more compatible with other interests, and try to get more fun out of it and more out-door exercise for more people. She has tried to get her chief competitor to see sport in the light that she did, and play with her on easier terms, but has not been able to get her preferences in these particulars respected. For the rival has gone straight on, getting better and better instruction for her oarsmen and football players, hiring such coaches or trainers as she needed to hire and drafting those worth drafting, and

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

making the avocation of the university athlete more and more important and exacting and less and less reconcilable to the due development of his vocation as a student and the rounding out of his human nature. Of course in all the colleges the athletic avocation tends, among the leading athletes, to overtop and overshadow their vocation as students. No one college is to blame for that, but every college is to blame, in proportion as its influence in athletic matters has been potent and far-reaching, which has steadily made it harder to keep inter-collegiate sport in its proper place. It sounds like flubdub to say that if this or that college, in her athletic methods, had been somewhat more slack it would have been better for her and for all the colleges that compete with her. May be it is flubdub. Yet something like that must be the complaint if there is to be a complaint. The victories of the leaders in

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

the current intercollegiate contests are won by the brains of graduates and hired men, and by the same means must be won any victories that are won by colleges that compete with them. Unaided, or slightly aided, undergraduates cannot win in the greater intercollegiate competitions of the present day. A football team, or a crew that is to compete on equal terms with the leading teams and crews, must have the longest and most exacting training compatible with the necessary minimum of college work and the uncontrollable idiosyncrasies of the North American climate, and must be directed in it by masters of such work, who give to it all the time that can be advantageously employed in it, let their other duties be what they may. If intercollegiate contests on these terms cost too much; if the strain of them is unwholesomely great on everybody concerned in them; if the damage they do to scholarship and the mental and

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

social side of education is not offset by the good they do to the moral and physical side of it; if, finally, they exact too great a sacrifice of time and energy from the students who take the leading part in them and who in some cases are virtually compelled to take it, then we may perhaps be warranted in feeling that intercollegiate athletics is suffering from some redundancy of success.

Take another case.

If a politician cannot achieve popularity he might as well go out of business. His power, for good or bad, depends upon his ability to win the liking and the confidence of the voters. If the voters don't know him, don't like him, and don't prefer him to somebody else, he cannot, in this country, go far on the road toward political preferment. If he aspires to high place, extended power, and great opportunities for public service or the

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

gratification of his desires, he must make himself known to multitudes of people, and make them like him. That is the rule for all politicians, good or bad; for Lincoln or for Tweed; for Roosevelt or for Ruef. They are all aspirants for public favour, and they cannot go far or do much unless they get it.

No American in recent times, if ever, has won the public favour to the extent that an eminent contemporary statesman had won it two years ago. No American in office was ever so popular as he was then. How did he do it? Undoubtedly he made a business of it, but it was a business for which he was remarkably qualified, and to which he applied himself with astonishing energy. His greatest single qualification for the job of making people like him was his great ability to like them. He is a very warm-hearted man, with the instinct to please, an enthusiasm for generous and noble ideals, and

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

an extremely active, interesting mind with which to work upon the minds of others. His sympathies are very ready, and he has an unquestionable zeal to do the public the greatest service he can and put to rights everything that needs it. His method of practising the popular arts was, chiefly, to let himself out and behave according to his natural impulses. There was plenty of press-agent and billboard work about his remarkable military career, but it was voluntary work, contributed *gratis* by the newspaper correspondents and bill-stickers, rejoicing to push along a good thing. Of course, in certain particulars the luck went marvellously his way, but when Fortune's favours dropped in his arms, he never fumbled them, but dealt with them according to the impulses of his heart and the admonitions of his wits. The result was the accumulation of an all but boundless popularity, based very largely on



## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

sound reasons, and remarkably solid and durable, considering the rapidity of its growth. The trouble with it has been, not that it was too great to last, for it has lasted surprisingly, but that the enormous influence that it brought him, joined to the authority of office, gave him more power than he could handle wisely, and deprived him of checks that should have limited its use. Public opinion can restrain any officer of government, but it has been until recently of very little use as a brake to this one because he has controlled it, his popularity being so overwhelming as to make even reasonable opposition and reasonable criticism disastrously unsafe for members of his own party, and futile in any one else.

Besides that, popularity is a thing with a vast appetite that demands constant feeding. It is an instinct with most of us human creatures to hold what we have got, and try to add to it. We like to keep

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

on rolling our snowballs, and we look to see where there is the most snow. There is a popular and disgusting maxim—disgusting because there is so much truth in it—that there is no such thing in affairs as standing still, and that when we cease to gain we begin to lose. It is that, in great measure, that keeps a great money-maker continually on the reach after more gains long after he has got enough; that that makes a college that has established the habit of winning in athletics look upon defeat as an unbearable calamity; that that makes a statesman contrive policies and press measures, to hold his following. A general is bound to feed his army till he finishes the campaign. This statesman we have in mind, to fulfill his aims, had to feed his popularity, and fed it finally so many burning words and urgent purposes and autocratic actions that a very respectable and conservative element in the population came to be afraid of him, and to be

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

solicitous that when his strenuous hands let go of the Republican sceptre it should pass to some milder man without so much reputation to maintain. It seems arguable, therefore, that he succeeded more than was profitable in the work of gaining popularity, since he got so much that it strained his resources to feed it, and made thoughtful and friendly observers fear the consequences of its continuing to be fed. And it blinded him a little, too, making him feel that he must be right in almost everything he did, because the people were with him in such overwhelming majority. But they were with him, not because everything he did was wise, but because they believed in him and trusted in his character. For the people are pretty sound judges of character, but in their estimate of the wisdom of measures and the expediency and timeliness of means they are a very untrustworthy guide.

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

Happily for him, and for his fame, and for the country, he had the remarkable sagacity to put an absolute limit, by a timely declaration, to his servitude to his own popularity. His notice given, in good season and in convincing form, of his purpose not to be again a candidate for the office he holds, was notice of a clear and final determination not to sacrifice the gains and the hopes of a remarkable success in living to any glamour of a possibly unprecedented success in life.

Too much success is that which is gained by the sacrifice of something worth more than itself. The great objection to it, outside of its own undesirableness, is that it disturbs the balance of things. It is unstable, impermanent, the exploit of imperfectly civilized people, carrying in itself the seeds of its own dissolution. If we are wise we shall not wish to tie up to it, nor to see our children allied with its

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

exponents. Examples of it abound in history and in contemporary life. The Slave Power succeeded too much; the Tariff has succeeded too much.

Instances are very common of men who succeed too much in business or in speculation, lose their sagacity of judgment and come to crashing discomfiture. For all considerable success is a trial of character, and has its danger-point, where the job begins to want to own the man.

The great, effectual remedy for dangers of that sort is the practice of the golden rule, and the resolute shifting of one's labours from self-aggrandizement and selfish accumulation to the service of society. The men who have it in them to succeed too much are the ones whose labours it is most important to divert betimes from private concerns to the huge task of keeping order and prosperity in the world.

Is it a propensity that is peculiarly

## TOO MUCH SUCCESS

American, I wonder, this propensity to succeed too much? The examples of it that have been submitted above are typical American examples. Is it something in the air we breathe here that partially disqualifies some of our natural winners from knowing when they have won enough? Is it that our society is so restless and so rapacious that profitable living in it is too hard to achieve, and we are constrained to find such a substitute as we can for it in the headlong pursuit of success in life? Do our dratted wheels turn too fast and wear us out with half futile revolutions? Sometimes it seems so. Certainly it seems true—true for individuals and still more conspicuously and incontestibly true for a people—that success in life is mainly valuable as it leads to, or makes possible, success in living.

*March, 1908*

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

TOMLINSON used to say he had all the proclivities and all the compunctions. He expressed a sense of obligation to his compunctions for keeping him out of jail and the electric chair and other objectionable depositories, but he suspected that they had been an obstacle to attainment. A man with all the proclivities, no compunctions, and a sound and skilful legal adviser, seemed to him to be in a better case to achieve a large harvest and interesting adventures than his own conflicting endowment had ever permitted him to command. But he did not repine. He recognized the value of his proclivities as so many molecules of energy, so many incentives to action, but it was

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

his compunctions that he respected and valued and was proud of. Some things that he had done he was thankful to have done, but not so thankful—no, not nearly—as that he had not done some things that his compunctions had deterred him from doing.

Of late, hereabouts, the development of judicious compunctions has seemed to be the thing that most of all was in particular request. Nobody accuses us Americans of deficient activity. It is conceded that we strive in the fashion of those who expect to prevail. The fault we are used to be charged with is not laziness, but that the urgency of various of our aspirations has outrun the restraints reasonably proper to the stage of civilization which we are understood to have attained. Sad to say, the European caricaturists no longer use the eagle to personify our nation, but the hog. Now that the times have turned bad on us, the



## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

general reason given and accepted for it is that we have been too eager to get and to spend, and not sufficiently provided with compunctions about how we did it. No doubt, as far as it goes, that is a true enough reason, especially if we understand "true," as Dr. William James does, to be "the term applied to whatever is practically profitable for us to believe." There is fairly good authority that it is practically profitable for us to acknowledge every day that we are miserable sinners, and especially in the last four years there has been increasing need for us to keep our compunctions well up to their work. As happens when things go well for successive years, we were all getting so extravagant and so appreciative of material blessings that it may sadly be admitted that perhaps we really did need to be brought up with a round turn, and to remember what the catechism says is the chief end of Presbyterian man, and to

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

consider the cost of things as compared with their real worth to us. We did need a great development of compunctions, some, each of us felt, for his own use, but more for the use of others, whose need of them, in our judgment, was more pressing.

But, after all, a nation cannot live on compunctions alone. We have developed a great store of them, and yet we are not entirely happy. Compunctions, precious as they are, cannot do business all by themselves. If their work is to be wholesome and beneficial they must have proclivities to combine with. No doubt liberty is better than meat, but they go well together. Why not have both, if possible, or at any rate let folks choose as far as they may which they prefer.

There is something like an irrepressible conflict between meat and liberty. If everybody was all for liberty, there wouldn't be enough meat raised to go

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

around. Most kinds of work that establish a claim for wages involve a considerable abridgment of freedom. We are paid for slaving for our fellows, and the more meat we require or covet, the larger, as a rule, is the share of freedom that we must forego. So, if everybody was all for meat and ready to make any sacrifice of freedom to get it, the supply of freedom would be pretty sure to dwindle. In fat years, like those lately experienced, meat gets the start of freedom. In lean years like this freedom clamours for its own, and does what it may to catch up.

So it is with the conflict of the proclivities and the compunctions. For years together the proclivities have had the best of it, have eaten and drunk, hired lawyers, watered stocks, bought legislation, given rebates, filled the sea with yachts and the land with automobiles, and waxed very fat. Now the compunctions have the upper hand again,

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

and have got the poor proclivities driven into a corner and fighting for their lives, so that we begin to have for them the sort of compassion that is always ready to succour the under dog. After all, we must remember that the proclivities are the dog, and the compunctions, lively and useful as they may be, are only the fleas. They are good to bite the dog, who often needs biting; but destroy the dog, and they will be homeless and of no use but to train and exhibit if any one has the patience for the job or the money to pay admission. If we are to preserve the compunctions and provide useful employment for them, we must save the proclivities alive.

A good, fat railroad, for instance, crowded with traffic and dripping securities at every mile, is worth biting. It will keep a little army of compunctions in steady nourishment and active in their calling. So will a great, domineering

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

trust or a grandiose insurance company that does great things in a grand way. But when receiverships come, compunctions grow lean and listless. Fleas leave a dead dog, don't they? What do the nature-fakers tell us about that? At any rate, be on the safe side, and keep the dog alive, if only for the sake of the fleas.

Let us gather, then, such indulgent and extenuating thoughts as we may about the proclivities, to the end that they may be left alive, and that all compunctions may not perish off the earth for lack of something nourishing to bite. Take the proclivities at their worst, and there will seem not to be one of them that should hope to be saved. That great proclivity, turbulent and unruly, that makes for the perpetuation of the species—what hob it raises! Take up any newspaper and read its criminal record, going on day after day, age after age, leaving

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

more or less of murder, insanity, suicide, and misery in its wake. Why do we tolerate it? Only because of our instinctive conviction that it is convenient for us that we should. There have always been sects and individuals that didn't, but the mass of mankind always look on the bright side of that proclivity and find saving and indispensable graces and values in it. The price of an unreplenished earth has always seemed to the mass of mankind too great to pay for a possible gain in human deportment, so that momentous proclivity has held its own in the face of vast resulting inconvenience, and, at times, of religious discouragement and of irksome religious condescension. The verdict of the thoughtful upon it has been that, duly geared to suitable compunctions, it was amply worthy of the hospitality of mankind; but so far its enjoyment of that hospitality has never been dependent upon any verdict. It has

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

claimed its own in war and peace, in good times and bad, and the effort of the wise has merely been to keep its due cohort of compunctions on their job.

And there is the great fighting proclivity, so little to be extolled for its own sake, but, so far in the world's history, so inexorable in its exactions. Over against it stand not only most of the compunctions, but most of the other proclivities. So enormously wasteful it is, so brutal, so incompatible apparently with most things that men want—with progress, with civilization. Yet there it sticks, head down and stubborn, ready to claim its rights when events are ready. It has few friends; religion—our religion—is against its ideals, and perpetually tempers and softens it. Distress and grief and want follow its greater outbursts. And yet it is respected. The nations chain it up, but they dare not neglect to feed it. Destruction and sal-

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

vation being apparently bound up together in it, it may not be suffered to perish until the fulness of some time, appointed possibly, but not yet disclosed.

Hard holds mankind, too, to the proclivity to eat and drink, and to be merry at times, using what the earth produces with such discretion as experience affords. The adjustment of compunctions and prohibitions to this proclivity has become in itself an important branch of human endeavour. Men, women, and societies devote themselves to it with persistent fervour, accomplishing a vast deal that is valuable, but a good deal also that is not. Enthusiastic professors expound to us that we consume food in enormous excess of our reasonable needs, and perhaps we do, but we find eating a pleasant exercise and stick to it, according to our various capacities, as long as we can get food that suits us and our digestions hold out. As for drink, the habit of using beverages



## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

that are more or less stimulating in their qualities is at least as old as history, and doubtless very much older. Coeval with it have been perception of its hazards and warnings against its continuance. Hardly any major proclivity has such a bad name, or is battered by such a fusillade of arguments and awful examples. That rum does any one any good must seem doubtful even to its best friend. When you have said that it is pleasant, and that though it is immensely destructive to some savages and to crowds of civilized individuals, a considerable proportion of the most valuable people on the earth seem to be able to play with it without serious damage to themselves, you have said almost all that it is safe to aver. So great a cloud of compunctions swarm over that proclivity that you marvel that there is any life left in it. They do keep down some of its vigour, so that it is less destructive than it used to be,

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

and probably they hope in time to kill it altogether. One could wish that they might succeed and that it might stay dead for a generation or two, till we could find out whether the world was better or worse without it. But it is not being killed. The army of compunctions it maintains is evidence of its enormous vitality. To all seeming, so long as the earth continues to spin there are likely to be cakes on it, and also ale, but with great improvement probably by the human race in the wise use of both.

Finally, consider the proclivity for getting rich which critics throw at us, and we throw at one another, as the great blemish in our national character. If there were not such venerable and respected authority for believing that the love of money is the root of all evil, the cursory observer might easily imagine that it was the root of all good. We Americans need a vast deal of money.

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

We have a very large family, including a raft of adopted children, to look after and educate and start in life. Our grounds are very extensive; our tastes are expensive; it is a matter of appalling expenditure merely to keep us going from year to year, let alone what we may need to expand our experiences of life. And how are we going to get so much money? Have our forebears earned it and laid it up for us? No, not to any adequate extent. We have to get most of it ourselves from year to year. Perhaps we have some co-operative method of money-getting—all to work as they like, and all share alike? No; just the old way. Everybody to hustle around in working hours and get what he can, and keep what he can after swapping what he must for necessities, and what he will for luxuries. It is on the individual money-getting proclivity, then, that we must depend for all the necessities, comforts,

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

enlargements, and benevolences that belong to prosperity. Let us be thankful that that proclivity is strong; strong enough in some of us to make up for the lack of it in others; strong enough to endure jeers, floutings, and discouragements, the cloutings of envy, the hindrances of folly, and all the valuable and necessary compunctions of philosophy and virtue. There must be hobbles handy for this proclivity, as for all the others, for sometimes it needs slowing up. Individuals have it to violent excess, and have to be restrained and take treatment, as happens with the others, too. When we shed all our material vestments and go to glory, we shall doubtless get on well without it. But meanwhile it is one of the great basic proclivities in which civilization and progress have their roots. Duly disciplined, penetrated with intelligence and geared with brotherliness, it is a great national property, a keeper of peace,

## PROCLIVITIES AND COMPUNCTIONS

and a great discoverer and distributor of knowledge. Let us not try too hard to root it out of our make-up, nor be unduly ashamed of it, even though Europe, in the temporary eclipse of our powers of disbursement, does make that jeering substitution of the hog for the eagle.

*June, 1908.*

## READING

THERE is a pretty general complaint about the contemporary American reader that he does not read as good books as he should. The publishers keep testing his mind's appetite, and report with practical unanimity that he likes a pretty light diet. If the publishers can find some one who can write an acceptable story, they can promise to find readers for it—for some stories a great many readers—but for any harder and more difficult and informing sort of literature, whatever its merit, they are modest in their anticipations. We hear it said that for new books of the more substantial sort—histories, memoirs, travels, and the like—our eighty millions of population does not yet provide so sure a market as the thirty millions of Great

## READING

Britain. The habit of reading the more substantial books seems to have taken hold of a much larger proportion of the people of the British Isles than of us Americans. And even that is not all. We seem not to be gaining the habit, for the proportion of light reading in the current mass of new literature seems to be increasing.

Why that is, and whether it is a temporary condition or something more serious, is matter for discussion. I suspect it is one of the habitual complaints of literate mankind that the readers of the generation just passed read better books than those of the generations in being. It is no fault of the publishers, for there are plenty of publishers who are eager to print the best books they can hope to sell. They won't print many books that no one will buy, because such a practice as that, if it became habitual, would be incompatible with continuance in the

## READING

publishing business. But they have an interest, which is more than a mere pecuniary interest, in what they publish, and would much rather find their necessary profit in a book that they can be proud of than in one which can never do credit to their name, however much it may help their pocket.

Probably the case of the readers is not so bad as it seems from the mere fact that everything but fiction is hard to sell. The competition of the magazines and newspapers with books for the attention of readers is much fiercer in this generation than it ever was before. Periodicals are read enormously, and are the chief support of the best writers of the day, and in them fragments, at least, of many of the solider new books make a preliminary appearance, along with nearly all the best new stories and novels.

To be sure, the more substantial new books are in competition with all the



## READING

great books that ever were printed. If readers neglected the good new books in order to read the good old ones, we might regret it as something detrimental to the book-publishing business and the interests of living authors, but we would not find in it a sign of decaying culture or degenerating taste. But it is not the competition of the old books that limits attention to new ones, for whoever has learned to read the one is by so much the likelier to read the other. Who has the habit of good reading and the appetite for it will read what suits his appetite if he can get it. The trouble is that the appetite is not oftener formed.

If you are to make a silk purse, you must have the silk. You cannot make a reader of good books out of any human material that comes along. You must catch a mind proper for the job. Not all good minds are adapted to much reading. You find very able people who read

## READING

few books, and mostly trash, and people of less ability who read more, and much better ones. You find also interesting differences in the facility with which different people take in the sense of printed words. Some people from childhood read very much faster and with less effort than others. Their eyes seem to connect quicker with their brains, and their perception of words and rows of words is almost instantaneous. Other people never entirely get past the need of pronouncing, mentally, each word. They must hear the word in their minds, if not actually with their ears, before they can fully take it in, whereas the quicker (visual) readers get the sense of it by processes so rapid that they are not distinguishable as processes at all. The slow readers read fewer books, but not necessarily either better or worse ones.

There are great differences, too, in the mental energy of different people, and in

## READING

the directions in which it expends itself; and there is as much idiosyncrasy about the diet that different minds require as in what suits different stomachs. There are minds that are fed, soothed, and re-animated by music, others by conversation, others by reading. Not that ordinarily there is anything incompatible about these three means of mental refreshment, with all of which most of us deal more or less; but in any individual any one of them may be developed at the cost of the others, or any two to the restriction of the third. If only somehow your mind is fed, and your wits have good substance to work on, it matters not greatly how or whence it is fed. There is no intrinsic merit in merely reading books—even good books. What matters is what you get out of them. For most educated people they are the easiest and surest road to knowledge, the most accessible and unfailing fountain

## READING

of inspiration, the restfullest resort and the most available entertainment: But their place in the world is along with the tools, the bread, the meat, and the powder—things indispensable, or near it, to civilization, but things only useful to those who have use for them and can use them, and only valuable when used to good purpose.

To read more than one can digest and turn into energy or reserve power is not much better than to eat more than can readily be managed, or than the body requires. There are habits of excessive reading that rank—hardly with excessive gambling or drinking, for they are not so destructive—but well up in the list of the self-indulgent bad habits, like excessive smoking, that help lazy people to neglect their reasonable duties with comfort and no loss of self-esteem.

Nevertheless, so great and honourable has come to be the reputation of books

## READING

and book learning that it is, *prima facie*, a reproach to any modern person of fair opportunities to have it said with truth that he never reads a book that is worth reading. It leaves him in a posture that requires explanation if not excuse. If it appears that his daily energies are so engrossed by his daily labours that he has no energy left for any reading that requires energy, that explanation will be understood. If it appears that his mind is fed by observation and by the constant impact of other minds, and thoroughly exercised in making decisions and the solving of hard problems, that, too, will be understood. In spite of exceptions, men extremely active in affairs—fortune-builders, projectors of great enterprises—are seldom large readers of books. The best readers, naturally, are people of more leisure, and especially the young and the old; for it is before we get into the rushing current of life's employments, and

## READING

after we have begun to emerge from it, that most of us working people have most leisure to read. What we read in our age matters not so very much, if only we like it and it keeps us happy; but we are very fortunate indeed if we can get to know good books and something of what is in them while we are still young. That is like storing corn in our granaries and gasoline in our tanks: we go so much the better for it when we get on the road.

And so I find it a matter of very general solicitude with parents to find some means of inducing their children to read improving books while they have the chance. I don't find many parents whose success in this endeavour matches their efforts or their hopes. Bookcases with glass doors and monotonous looking sets of books behind them are comparatively common in American drawing-rooms, but tolerably well-stocked libraries are comparatively scarce. Of course you may

## READING

lead a child to a library, and even leave him there, and not be able to make him read; but he is more likely to read a library than he is to read the parlour bookcase, especially if the bookcase is locked because the books in it are so nicely bound. Familiarity with books—even if only with the backs of them—seldom breeds contempt. It is much more apt to breed friendship, and sometimes it breeds strong affection like that for dear people.

But to constrain a young person to read what his elders consider profitable to him is pretty uphill work. It is a case in which leading gives better results than driving. The indispensable preliminary is to create an appetite for knowledge, or at least an active realization of the need to know something that the better sort of books contain. The readiest means of exciting such an appetite in the young is by conversation. If children are used to hear good talk—

## READING

talk that has knowledge behind it, and that is concerned with matters really worth talking about—they may come to understand why it is worth while to know something, and how a fair and growing store of book knowledge helps to equip them with opinions and means of comparison, and to make their ideas about things interesting to others, and the ideas of other qualified people interesting to them. What chiefly determines the scope and quality of our talk is what we know, and what seems to be known by the person we are talking with. Children that grow up in families where the talk is generously flavoured with acquired knowledge not only pick up a great deal of knowledge from what they hear, but are likely—or at least liable—to develop an appetite for more, and to go to books to satisfy it. But the talk, to have that result, must be interesting, and of course talk is not necessarily interesting because



## READING

it is bookish. The bookish talk of some bookish people is as dull and unprofitable as talk can well be, and not to be compared with the gossip of a lively observer who simply skims the newspapers and takes habitual notice of what is going on.

The newspaper, which becomes a book if you think of its annual yield bound up between covers, is in our day the greatest and most indispensable book of all; but it should be read with vigour and discrimination, and it should be a stimulant to other reading and not a substitute for it. For the young it is not essential. The obligation to be up with the times does not belong to youth. The duty of that part of life is to acquire foundations for intelligent thought to rest upon, but when the foundations are laid the newspaper is a great purveyor of material for the superstructure.

The enormous dimensions of the mass of human knowledge as contained in

## READING

books is liable to daunt young readers, and discourage them from even nibbling at so huge a cake. The long books are so long, and there are so many of them, and life, all told, is but a span! Help the young readers to a release from that burdensome feeling and to appreciation of the truer sentiment that a good book is the record of the thoughts of a good mind, and that whether one reads much or little of it, contact with the mind that made it is profitable. For though one aim of reading is to gather facts and add to knowledge, its greater use is to teach us to think. Knowledge is like the ore in a great mine, for there is no end to it, and each of us gets out what he can, and smelts it as best he can to get the good out of it. But wisdom comes more like a nugget, and so much of it as we are lucky enough to find is ready for use.

Experience of life adds greatly to the interest of some classes of books—history

## READING

and biography especially. Even a good newspaper reader, after twenty or thirty years of it, comes to have knowledge of his own historical period at least, and is bound to have reflected upon politics and problems of government, religion, social experiments, and the great topics that concern civilized life. It will interest him to piece out what he remembers, or half remembers, with what he finds in books that are concerned with his own time, or the time immediately preceding it, and to compare politics as he knows them with politics as they have been in the past. All history being a record of what men have done, the better we know men and understand the springs of human action, the more interesting it is to know how men have thought and acted in times past. Plutarch's men seem very far away when we read about them in early life, and get no nearer from comparing them with one another. But it

## READING

makes a difference when in maturer years we compare Cæsar, not with Alexander, but, out of our own heads and memories, with General Lee or General Grant.

## WRITING

PERHAPS the practised reader who has learned how, can read so that you forget that he is reading, and take his words as though they came popping at you fresh from the mind that thought them; but with most of us it happens that the instant we proceed from talk into reading there comes a change in the quality of our intonations. It is not our talk any longer, but some one else's, of which we are the mouthpiece.

A subtle distinction very like this difference between talk that is talked and talk that is read is apt to obtain between talk and writing. Most of us, when we undertake to write anything, instinctively assume, as our pen comes out of the ink-pot, a tone a little different from our natural tone of voice. Practice of the

## WRITING

right kind tends to obliterate this difference, and to make the writer's writing more like good talk, and, incidentally, to make his talk more like good writing. It is not a bad thing for a man to talk like a book, provided it is exactly the right sort of book and he doesn't talk like too much of it at once. It is high praise for some kinds of writing to say that it reads like oral speech, but it won't be good writing unless the talk it sounds like is very good talk. In good writing there is the sound of the writer's voice. Surely Milton's living voice is in his prose, and Ruskin's voice in Ruskin's prose, and another voice in Hawthorne's, and another in Newman's, and another in Thackeray's. Style is not an arbitrary thing. It is personal. It has a different tone in every writer, just as the living voice and enunciation is different in each person, and no two painters paint alike. Style regards words as sounds, and puts

## WRITING

them together so that they sound well. To reconcile them to grammar is not difficult. To observe how alliterations and assonances enter into style is analytically interesting, but of no practical value in writing. The ear attends to those details.

It is wonderful what subtleties of tone, of feeling, of sentiment, of emotion, can be put into written words, and into very common little words at that. Provided you know something—not so very much—about how to use them, words seem to hold just what you intrust to them, both the sense and the spirit, and keep it to show to any pair of eyes that comes looking for it, and have a discerning and sympathetic mind behind them. You put tears into your words, and the sympathetic reader will snuffle when he comes to them, but you must have snuffled first yourself; put in a smile, and he will smile; catch your spirit at a moment of exaltation or of strong emotion and capt-

## WRITING

ure its message with a pencil—there it will be alive and inspiring for whoever reads it with competent eyes.

A great charm about writing is the possibility of writing better than you know; of getting hold of better thoughts than you are fairly entitled to think, or do think, as a rule, and putting them into words of unsuspected felicity. But you must think the thoughts for the moment. You can't put down what you never had, but you can put down what you had and lost.

Most of us are uneven in our mental processes. We don't think big thoughts all the time. We think them under pressure of strong emotions or of fortunate physical conditions. Even when there is no special occasion to inspire a thought that is better than common, it will often come as the result of concentration of the mind, conscious or unconscious, on some particular subject. The mind's auto-



## WRITING

matic action is a very important phase of its activities. It keeps going all the time, and strikes a good many sparks on its own hook. Once a good mind has been headed on a certain course, it is apt to hold that course more or less closely, or at least to revert to it, until it arrives somewhere; and this it will often do whether its owner keeps his watch at the wheel or not. I think that most writers, when they have got some particularly good idea into some particularly lucid and effective form of words, often feel that the job is only partly of their doing, and that a good deal of it, and probably the very best of it, came to them by processes more or less independent of their volition. Nobody writes without putting his will into the work and making the indispensable effort, but what comes is partly what is in him, and partly what is given him to say, and which is which he may not know, nor whence came what was

## WRITING

given. What we call literary talent, or, in its rarer and more remarkable form, genius, seems to be the gift of having extra good ideas come into the mind, and clothe themselves with extra good language. Very young writers have sometimes powers of expression which persons less lucky never get. There is an ear for language like the ear for music, and akin to it. Girls of the most limited experience and youths of inadequate education seem now and then to possess by instinct the faculty of expression; of putting their words where they ought to go, and doing the trick that makes literature.

It is a great advantage to a writer to have sense, but he can get along with a moderate supply of it if only he is a good enough writer. It is an advantage to him to have learning, provided he has it under good control and doesn't let it run away with him or dam him up. But the thing he *must* have is ideas. It is

## WRITING

hard sledding for a writer to get along without ideas. Somehow, if he is going to be a writer, he must have bubbles in his mind. He can borrow a great many thoughts if he knows where to find them. What is learning but the assimilation of other men's ideas! But while some persons are writers because they are possessed with ideas that demand to be expounded, a good many others attain more or less painfully to the possession of ideas because they are called to be writers and are peremptorily constrained to have something to impart. It isn't quite enough to have language, though if you know enough words and attain to a truly skilful use of them, you can make them go a good ways. You must have some kind of an idea to string them on if you are going to make a tolerable literary job. Sit down with pen, paper, ink, and a dictionary—if you need one. Then we all know what happens. You

## WRITING

have got to think. There is no way out of it. Thinking is to the natural man a severe and repugnant exercise, but the natural man is not a writer. Before anybody becomes a writer he must subjugate nature to the extent of partially overcoming his distaste for consecutive thought. I dare say it is a healthy distaste. I think the subjugation can be overcome, especially if the writer aspires to have many readers. If a writer thinks too fluently and exhaustively, even though he thinks well, he is liable to tire his reader out before he lets go himself. And when a reader is thoroughly tired he quits. That is his privilege, and that is one of the writer's risks that he must consider. If you sit under a speaker, you must often sit him out whether he thinks too exhaustively for you or not, but a writer can hardly put any one to so much inconvenience as that. If his thought is too protracted or doesn't strike

## WRITING

you as edifying, you can shut him off in the middle of a sentence, without any lapse of manners or offense to any one. A man who has been a fairly successful writer for a good many years has been heard to attribute his success to the exceptionally feeble quality of his mind, which brought it about that he always got tired of any line of thought he was expounding before the reader did. There is something in that idea, though presumably that was not the whole story, but the same instinct that saves a talker from being a bore must save a writer from being the same. The proper aim of writers, however, is not so much to relieve the reader from the trouble of assimilating thoughts as to put the thought to him so skilfully, so concisely, in such an orderly way, and with such felicities of illustration and diction, that he will take it in gladly and without too much consciousness of effort.

## WRITING

I don't mean to say that it should be the chief end of every writer to make easy reading. A proper handling of his subject may not admit of that. But he should make as easy reading as the proper handling of his subject will allow. He ought to marshal his ideas, or his facts, in their proper order, and to use the right words, and to put them in the right places, so that the reader will have no unnecessary trouble in taking what he gives out, but may find a profit in what he says and a pleasure in the way he says it.

Why does any one take to writing as a calling? There are reasons enough. It is one way to get an honest living, and a man may lawfully choose it, and may live by it, better or worse, and be happy in the practice of it. Writing is both a profession and an art. On its money-getting side it seems to me not a particularly good profession. A successful law-

## WRITING

yer or a successful doctor commonly earns more money than a successful writer, and there are vastly more lawyers and doctors who succeed in a measure worth talking about than writers. But a man seldom takes to the profession of writing with money-making as his primary object, any more than he takes to the ministry or to teaching for that purpose. He takes to writing because he likes it and has a turn for it, or because he cannot wait to fit himself for some other profession, or is debarred for some reason from other professions, or because opportunity offers. Once he commences writing and undertakes to live by his work, he will probably want to get out of it all the money he can without sacrifice of things that are worth more to him than mere money. Mere money, for example, will not tempt a wise man, let alone a good one, to take service with a newspaper which he does not approve, nor

## WRITING

to write trash, which, being capable of better things, he knows to be trash, because the market for trash happens to be better than the market for literature. There is no great harm in writing trash, so be it it is not vicious, if a man can do no better. But for a man of real talent and literary power to turn away from art, and the truth that art must express, to trash and drivel is prostitution. It is a writer's duty to write his best, and he cannot turn his back on that duty for long without paying the penalty in reputation and in power. As for what he may earn, Stevenson says grandly about that, that "surely at this time of day in the nineteenth century there is nothing that an honest man should fear more timorously than getting and spending more than he deserves." That is a noble sentiment, and Stevenson, to do him justice, lived handsomely up to it, writing his best always, sticking to art,



## WRITING

which is difficult, shunning slop, which is easy, taking what came to him, which eventually was a good deal, and earning more than he got. But Stevenson was always of a Bohemian turn. He did not raise a family, nor have boys and girls in school, and when he wrote down that fine sentiment I think he had not yet even acquired a wife. Most honest writers nowadays would rather that they themselves got and spent more than they deserved than that the excess was added to the moral burden of their publishers. To write down below your natural or possible level because it pays better is bad, and is even a bad business policy; but so long as you write the best you can it is no sin to take all you can gracefully get for what you have written.

But not many writers get rich. Some newspaper owners do, but that is business. Some successful novelists make a good deal of money. One or two books

## WRITING

every year are worth a little fortune to their writers. The possibility thus illustrated of making a good pot of money rather suddenly in the writing business helps to make it attractive. There are good chances in it, good money prizes, and they are useful in any line of industry.

Stevenson says: "There are two duties incumbent upon any man who enters on the business of writing: truth to the fact and a good spirit in the treatment. In every department of literature, though so low as hardly to deserve the name, truth to the fact is of importance to the education and comfort of mankind, and so hard to preserve that the faithful trying to do so will lend some dignity to the man who tries it." That seems to be very much to the point. Truth to the fact and a good spirit in the treatment is what we should aim at in the general conduct of life; but in writing, certainly, an endeavour after nothing less will serve. To

## WRITING

disclose the truth—so much of it as is needed—seems to be the chief end of the profession of writing. No one can know all the truth. No one can even know as much of it as he needs to know. But any writer can avoid writing what he knows not to be true, and any reasonably careful writer can usually avoid committing himself to statements that he is not sure of. One defect in newspapers is that they print so much that is not so. They are full of half-truths, but for that matter so is the world generally. Getting at the whole truth about anything is apt to be a work of vast difficulty and slow accomplishment, and newspapers are always in a hurry; but newspapers in general take a great deal more pains to learn and tell the truth than they get credit for.

The majority of writers seem to have come to that calling somewhat as men come to State-prison—without any orig-

## WRITING

inal purpose to get there, but after failure to realize different and perhaps better intentions. It is a rare thing for a boy to be deliberately educated to be a writer. It has been so precarious a calling that the usage has been to train youths for some calling in which the average chance of success was better. Then if they turn writers and don't succeed they will have something to fall back on. Sons of editors may tend naturally to the work on the family paper, but even then the attempt is often made to educate them as lawyers or put them into business. Examples may be cited at random: Lowell studied law, Emerson was a preacher, Holmes was a doctor and only practised literature as an avocation. Keats, who was born to write, went from school to be an apothecary's apprentice. Henry James studied law. Mr. Howells, to be sure, was educated in newspaper offices in Ohio, but Cable was clerk to a cotton

## WRITING

factor before he became a reporter, and Thomas Nelson Page practised law a good while and successfully before he became known as a writer. The rule still seems to be that before any man takes to writing for his bread he must have made a serious effort to get his bread by some other means. A man rarely gets a license to be a writer until he has demonstrated his unfitness or indisposition to be something else.

With women the way is less beset with obstacles. Writing is well adapted to be a domestic industry which folks can take up at home and work at in their spare time. It rivals singing and acting as the industry in which women compete most successfully with men. Lots of women work on newspapers and magazines. Shoals of them write books, and they write their full proportion of successful books. They are particularly good at stories, long and short. Mrs. Ward comes

## WRITING

pretty near being the leader of the contemporary novelists. Mrs. Wharton is extremely respected as a fabricator of tales, and nobody beats Mrs. Mary Wilkins Freeman at her kind of short stories.

Even modest people like to make stir enough in the world while they are in it to be identified. The conditions for making that much of a stir are very favourable in the literary calling. The thing that most brings reputation is advertisement. A writer who puts his name to his work is constantly advertised. If he can break into print at all, his name gets to be known, and if anybody likes his deliverances they come to feel that they have made acquaintance with the writer of them. So the great writers are known by millions of people, and the lesser ones in their day by thousands. While a highly successful and useful man of business, or lawyer, or doctor, may be known only to a restricted circle of ac-

## WRITING

quaintance and a limited number beyond it, a writer of perhaps less ability and less merit may be known, in a way, up and down the land. No profession is so well advertised except, perhaps, those of the actor, the politician, and the high-class criminal, and the last is at a disadvantage, because when he becomes eminently famous they hang him or put him in jail.

Of course, a literary reputation, besides being gently gratifying to one's vanity, has a business value, because the writings of a man who is well known and has gained the ear of readers is worth a great deal more than the work of a man whom the public doesn't yet know. And besides the pecuniary value of a literary reputation, it is pleasant. To be looked up to a little, or even affectionately regarded, is one of the most compensating things in life, and many writers have been and are so regarded by a great

## WRITING

number of readers whom they have never seen, but whom they have helped, or to whom they have given pleasure.

And besides all that, writing is interesting work. A man's *work* is the thing that is going to take most of his time and energy, that he is going to put his best into, and that is going to be his chief reliance for entertainment. Work in the long run is a vastly more durable form of entertainment than play, though play has its uses and is good for a change. Any work a man devotes himself to is apt to interest him, but some kinds of work are pleasanter and more intrinsically interesting than other kinds. Writing is exceedingly pleasant if you can make it go well enough. It is the practice of an art, and to practise an art with skill is delightful. It is a pleasure to be able to kick a football so that it will go between the goal-posts, or where you want it to. That is a mighty skilful



## WRITING

job, and it gives pleasure in the doing because it is pretty and because it is difficult. To catch an idea, and send it where you want it to go, and have it go as it should and land where it is needed, is also an exploit that makes you happy. To do a good piece of work satisfies a certain hunger of the mind. Not that a writer always knows when a piece of his work is particularly good or not. Very often he doesn't. Once he gets started on his subject, all he can do is to keep his mind at work on it and put down, the best he knows how, the best his mind will yield. What he gets depends upon what is in him and whether he manages to get it out.

Writing verses is an entertaining branch of the literary calling, provided you can do it to your taste. Somehow, our faculties being such as they are, there are wonderful possibilities in poetry for stirring them. Verse-writing is good prac-

## WRITING

tice in getting the run of words and determining their order. You not only have to have a good many words at your command in order to choose such as make rhyme and rhythm come right, but you are apt to have to put them together in ever so many different combinations before you get the one you want. And there are such astounding possibilities in those combinations. The words are the same, or as good, as have served the English-writing poets since Chaucer. Is there not always the possibility that you may string a few dozen or a few hundred of them together in such a fashion that mankind will neither suffer them nor you to be forgotten? It has been done. Why may it not be done again? It can. There are all the pieces if one can only invent a surpassing pattern. It always seems *possible* to put the familiar little words together so as to make a surpassing poem, but very, very few writers have done it,

## WRITING

and those few have not done it by accident, but commonly as the fruit, more or less immediate, of long-continued effort coupled with genius.

Of making many books and myriads of magazines and newspapers there is no end, and armies of writers and would-be writers are always at it. And yet the supply of good writers is, nowadays, never equal to the demand. That is a great advantage. It keeps up rates, and make it unnecessary for writers to form unions and have strikes. There is a natural monopoly of high talent. Money can stimulate the production of good writing somewhat by offering inducement to good minds to take literary exercise, but it cannot buy good writing unless it is written, and it very often pays for qualities that are not delivered. Inducement and inspiration are not identical. Money may offer inducement, but inspiration comes from other sources. The love of

## WRITING

approbation is one source of inspiration, and in particular the hunger for the special approbation of careless young women of no particular discrimination about literature has been the inspiration of more good verses than all the gold pieces any one ever saw. And the love of truth, and the love of beauty, and the love of nature and of mankind are all inspirations of endless effectiveness.

## EXCLUSIVENESS

It seems to me that one keeps near enough to accuracy for practical purposes in saying that the two things that contribute most to make life an interesting experience are diversity of sex and disparity of means. Discrepancy of statement also makes for sport, but that is only a detail. The great thing that makes people worth cultivating is that there are so many different kinds of them. First, there is the sweeping difference based on gender, all the men being, happily, different from all the women. Then no two men are alike, and no two women are alike, and the conditions of life for every individual differ from the conditions of every other individual. It is a glorious and wonderful scheme of variety.

## EXCLUSIVENESS

To be sure, disparity of means is a derivative rather than a primary difference. People's fortunes and incomes are unequal because their minds, their luck, their chances, or their abilities are unequal. Ampler means may even be a consequence of tougher consciences. But however it comes, disparity of means (provided it isn't carried to too absurd an excess) is a great blessing to mankind in that it adds so much variety to life. There are a lot of different things to be done in the world that are remunerative. Some of them are within reach of the rich alone; others only the poor can afford to enjoy. If each of us had the same daily allowance of money, a great many good exercises would be neglected, and we would come much nearer to wanting, all of us, to do about the same thing than we do at present. Nobody would have a great house, nobody would have a big yacht, there would be no big diamonds

## EXCLUSIVENESS

cut any more, no group of our fellow-creatures would undertake the duty of affording a spectacle of luxury and embellishment to the rest. The dining-rooms of the liveliest hotels and restaurants in New York would cease to be a show of clothes and beauty. There would be no big private automobiles—nothing but rubberneck-wagons. No one would raise good horses, and if any one did, nobody would know it.

And if there were no disparity of means we could not talk about other people's money and what they do with it, nor be sorry for them because they were so hard put to it for sport, nor conclude that, on the whole, it was wholesomer to have less (but not too little) and work for it; nor could we enjoy the excitement of setting snares to get detachable masses of their money away from them by lawful means for our own use. And the other people, who have the money, would be balked of

## EXCLUSIVENESS

the pleasure of private reiteration that, say what you like, money has its value and is not going out of fashion for a while yet. When you think of the amount of talk and thought, aspiration, resignation, effort, and philosophy that has its roots in disparity of means, you must realize how ill that incident could be spared out of human existence.

The disparity can be too great, of course. We can get due disparity of means at vastly less expense than it is costing us at present, when fortunes run to hundreds of millions. But better present cost than no disparity.

And with disparity of means and the other disparities, most of which (except sex) impinge on it somewhere, comes the great daily question of associates. The world, luckily, is full of people of different genders and manners and unequal fortunes and abilities, all of whom are ours to know and play with if we can. But we



## EXCLUSIVENESS

cannot play with them all; there are too many. We must choose and be chosen. Some measure of selection becomes inevitable in every society as soon as its numbers increase enough to afford scope for choice, and of course selection implies some degree of exclusion. To cultivate one person or one family more, necessitates cultivating some other persons or families less. That is inevitable. Tastes differ, and a preference for one person or one lot of people does not necessarily imply disparagement of others. Propinquity, associations, relationship, and various circumstances determine who our friends shall be, and the advantage of having desirable and profitable friends is so obvious that the most careless observer cannot fail to discern it.

Indeed, suitable acquaintances are so good to have that appreciation of the advantage of having them leads some of us into the serious mistake of being over

## EXCLUSIVENESS

particular as to whom we shall know. The desire for the company of the best people we can get at—our betters if possible—is an aspiration that in itself is creditable to our intelligence, but we fall into a serious mistake when we let it go so far as to prompt us to limit our acquaintances to just the right people and no others. An exclusiveness that shuts us off from even an experimental knowledge of varieties of our fellow-creatures is neither conducive to our profit nor to our popularity. We laugh at people who, being highly pleased with the social position they have gained or highly solicitous to gain a better one, live in a state of daily apprehension for fear they will know somebody they ought not to know. They practise exclusiveness to their detriment. It is not a good thing in itself. As an inevitable incident of selection it has to be tolerated, but when it is so practised as to limit the field in which

## EXCLUSIVENESS

selection can operate, it is palpably ridiculous. To know many people and many kinds of people is in itself a very advantageous thing; for the more people we know, the better chance we have to learn whom we like and whom we can help and who can help us.

One of the best things about working for a living is that it gives the worker common interests with people with whom he could not otherwise come in contact. There are so many kinds of relations in life that are pleasantly profitable: the relations of social equals and of social unequals, of coevals and of persons of different ages, of master and servant, housekeeper and marketman, employer and employee, and endless others. One of the most accessible of all is the relation of coworkers, of persons of various stations, duties, and capacities engaged in the same task or in tasks which touch one another. The thing that more than

## EXCLUSIVENESS

any other single thing makes the individuals who compose human society interdependent is the necessity of making a living or the desire to make money. One does not realize either of these aspirations to advantage without getting down off any perch on which he may find himself installed, and working in the crowd shoulder to shoulder with the other workers. A high degree of exclusiveness is only possible to do-nothings, and is only prized by know-nothings. The people who value it seem to think that the crowd contaminates and vulgarizes; that such virtue as they may contain is diluted and weakened by a large acquaintance with ordinary people; that the only people to have easy relations with are the "nice" people, the people of social position who have something advantageous to confer, the people who are best to dine with and out of whom something can be made. That is

## EXCLUSIVENESS

a mistaken notion, and the mistake is one of small minds. The people—the great mass of the people—are the fountain of honour and the main source of most advantages. The wise course is to get in touch with as many of them as is reasonably convenient. There are a thousand relations in life besides dinner-giving relations that are worth while; there are a thousand phases of friendship that are worth cultivating besides the kind that flourishes between persons of equal social condition. Social condition is largely an accident. It does not touch character nor limit sympathy. In every walk of life there are the traits that invite and repay friendship. There is a common ground, if one's feet can only find it, on which all true people can stand in a substantial equality, an equality of the spirit and the affections. In every walk of life and irrespective of advantages of means and education there are

## EXCLUSIVENESS

people whose minds are interesting; people of talent, of humour, of sagacity, of sound discretion and integrity; people of constancy, capable of self-sacrifice and high devotion. The acquaintance of such people is worth cultivating wherever one finds them. Life is an aggregation of daily experiences, most of which are trivial, but the aggregate of trivial things counts for a vast deal. The familiar faces we see in the daily round and the brief exchanges of salutation and discourse that one encounters are incidents of superficial importance, but they go a long way toward making the difference between existence that is profitable and existence that is dull. To make the world a friendly place one must show it a friendly face.

There is as much inequality of position, social and fiscal, in this country as in most others, but there is less definite classification than in Europe. A vast

## EXCLUSIVENESS

number of American families, especially those that are descendants of settlers who came before the Revolution, stand on pretty much the same level so far as heredity goes. From generation to generation some members of some families have forged ahead out of the ruck, got a better place, more education, and more polished manners than the average, and passed their advantages down to their descendants, who have sometimes retained and sometimes lost them. The difference of position between a seasoned American millionaire and a mill-hand or a small farmer is undeniably substantial, yet they may both be of the same general stock, and both be made, individually, of pretty much the same stuff. It may seem strained to say that they do not belong to different classes, but it is true in the sense that there are no definite class barriers between them. The millionaire does not belong to a ruling class

## EXCLUSIVENESS

and the mill-hand to a lower one. In their derivation and in their feelings and attitudes toward things and people they are not unlikely to have a great deal in common, and if the mill-hand happens to be clever and lucky in his opportunities, what distance there is between him and the millionaire may be so far bridged in a couple of decades that their children or grandchildren will start in life with chances very nearly equal. In spite of the trusts and all other imputed obstacles there is still a nearer approach to equality of opportunity in this country than in most others. As yet, at least, we are not classified. No American is a prince, none is a peasant. The great mass of our people is like the surface of the ocean at any given moment—full of surging inequalities, but undivided. I am not sure that this unclassified state that we value so much and with so much reason is the most favourable one for



## EXCLUSIVENESS

social interdependence. The impression one gets from reading some English novels is that more helpful, intimate, and affectionate relations may be obtained in a classified country between individuals of different classes than are apt to prevail in our less definitely organized society between the folks on the crests of the waves and those in the trough. Where there are classes, there are strong ties between classes—class habits, class duties, class attitudes toward life; a little less, perhaps, of the general scramble in which every man is for himself. That feature of the British landscape which Mr. Henry James missed most in rural New Hampshire was the country parson, whose great affair in English life, as I understand it, is to keep class in friendly and helpful touch with class. Here also religion and church associations are a most important tie between different kinds of people, but the English clergy, I should say, are in a

## EXCLUSIVENESS

somewhat better position to promote social solidarity than most of our clergy.

And of course politics is a tie of the first importance. A politician who amounts to anything can tolerate no nonsense about social exclusiveness. To know men—all sorts of men—is the breath of political life. To keep in touch with the voters, to know what is in the minds of men, to know what they want, what they know and feel, and how they can be influenced, is the pith of the politician's job. I wish we all were active politicians. Perhaps if we were all active Christians with a lively concern for our neighbour's welfare it would do as well or better, but the politicians illustrate particularly well the advantage of comprehensive human relations. The closet politician, who withholds himself from the mass of his fellows, may have his uses, but to gain elective offices (except by purchase) is not one of them. To be

## EXCLUSIVENESS

sure, being all things to all men takes time, and the social comprehensiveness of a practical politician commonly leaves him little leisure for anything else. The degree of incidental exclusiveness that guards a man's time and husband his energies for his daily work is indispensable to the accomplishment of any serious business, but that is a different matter from exclusiveness that shuts out for the mere sake of excluding.

Excepting hopeless bores who use up time and neither give nor get anything, very few acquaintances are detrimental to responsible grown-up people. Parents are apt to fidget about their children's friends and to want them to know the right kind of children and no others. To shield children as far as possible from bad company is no more than common-sense. To steer them into associations that promise to be to their advantage is what every competent parent wants

## EXCLUSIVENESS

to do. But even children profit by variety in their associates. To teach them to be socially exclusive is to teach them to be snobs, and against that most right-minded children instinctively rebel.

The people who hit off their social relations to the best advantage are those in whom a strong sense of human brotherhood is tempered by taste and discretion. Spontaneous friendliness is a most precious attribute. To have a friendly feeling for whatever is human is a great birthright, and one, by the way, that is much more likely to come down from parents who have enjoyed themselves in helping their fellow-men than from such as have set themselves to skin them. The *noli me tangere* attitude is the natural one for whoever has got more out of the world than the world owes him or who hopes to get more than is due. It is very much easier to regulate a natural friendliness by discretion than to expand

## EXCLUSIVENESS

an unreasonable offishness by assumed cordiality. A very moderate discretion suffices to keep a friendly nature within requisite bounds. One's time needs some protection if one's duties are to be done, and whatever one's personal choice of company may be, he should be wary of imposing it on others who have a contrary taste.

And even in cases where people limit their social relations overstraitly, there is a choice between the exclusiveness that is based on one's own taste even if it is faulty, and that which is due to an uneasy regard for the social taste of some one not immediately concerned. To assemble a lot of uncongenial people at a dinner is a bad mistake. To be scared out of asking whom you will to dinner because some one else is not used to ask them is a worse mistake still. There comes in the difference between mere exclusiveness and snobbishness. The

## EXCLUSIVENESS

merely exclusive people bite their noses off to suit themselves; the snobs do it to placate some one else. When we spoil our fun, by all means let us do it for our own pleasure.

A great deal of respect is due to people who have a good time. If they manage to enjoy life in any reputable and prudent fashion, their scheme of living cannot be wholly amiss. The kind of enjoyment that involves too prodigal an expenditure of the vital forces is not durable and does not commend itself to wise observers. But people who obviously manage to have a good time without noticeable detriment to health, estate, or character, even if they may not be persons of an especially exalted type of character, are apt at least to be genuine people, who know what they want and whom they like, and are never bothered by anybody's exclusiveness except their own.

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIVING ON ANYTHING A YEAR

ON nothing a year, we know it is possible to live, provided the circumstances are favourable and the wit to do it adequate. Becky and Rawdon managed it, and a famous chapter in fiction tells how. In the newspapers, from time to time, we read marvellous stories of its being done, and hear other stories that the papers don't get. As a rule the stories don't end well, either those we read or those we hear; but that is only a detail. The thing can be done, sometimes for long periods of time, and the living, while it lasts, may be very luxurious and expensive. Very commonly, indeed, it is pyrotechnic; a rocket flight, admired of beholders: *sissssss*—a long reach skyward; *boom !!!*—a glory of stars; *ahhhh !!!*

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIVING

—and somewhere a stick falls in the night, and perhaps a reporter picks it up.

It can be done, but it is not quite normal, and therefore not a very important subject for thought. The great mass of folks, if they live, must have something to live on; and their success, complete or partial, in living on what they have, or their failure to do it, is among the vitally important concerns of life: immensely important, economically, morally, spiritually, every way. The times have been good and now are bad. What ails them? Mainly this: the impossibility, demonstrated by the practical experience of enormous numbers of us Americans, let alone residents of foreign parts, of living on anything a year. We have all, practically all, had something a year to live on. Many of us have had more than we ever had before in all our lives. But whether we have had more or less, a much too



large proportion of us have found it impossible to live on it. Consequently, instead of accumulating capital we have accumulated debts; and have gone on accumulating them until the other day—ahhh !!!—there was a far-off sound in the blue empyrean, and something dropped.

Moralists tell us that we human creatures never stand still; that we are always moving either up or down, getting better or getting worse; gaining ground heavenward, or progressing the other way. Cities do not stand still. Either they gain in wealth and population, or they fall behind. A business, we are used to hear it said, must be either growing or diminishing. There is no keeping at the same point in business. So it is, I dare say, with people and their incomes: they are either spending appreciably more than they have, or saving money. Which of the two it is depends a little on how much the income is, but a great deal more

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIVING

upon the attitude of the mind. Thrift, that brilliant virtue, is the condition, become chronic, of liking money enough better than other objects to retain the money, and get along without the other objects, or defer their acquisition. The consequences of this condition are such details as getting along without superfluities, and making what we have go as far as we can. People whose minds are hard set on thrift, save at almost all times, and under almost all circumstances, and find their pleasure in it; and though their expenditures increase, very properly, with their incomes, their margin of savings increases still more, until, so progressing under the control of reason, they arrive at last at the ecstatic condition of having everything they want and getting richer every day.

Of course there are hazards about this way of doing. Over-enthusiasm in it may lead to such a pinching off of wants

## ON ANYTHING A YEAR

in the bud that not enough may develop to make life interesting; for to come to a solvent maturity without wants must be almost as annoying as to arrive at old age without any children. This is liable to happen to people of ability, who, starting very poor and economizing perforce in early education, grub along hard and thriftily and ably until with good luck they find themselves with plenty of money but an aching dearth of profitable wants, and too old and set in habits to develop some. Examples of this miscalculation are not rare, but they are not as comforting to philosophical observers as they ought to be, because the victims, being disciplined persons and trained in a hard school, usually plod along with unconscious stoicism, either ignorant that anything ails them, or consoled by indulgence on a larger scale than ever of the habit of acquisition which it has been their life's work to perfect.

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIVING

Thrift may overreach itself, but it usually happens the other way. It is the development of wants that is overdone. To the majority of us, as day after day we look first at our money and then at the importunate desires that the money could help to allay, the satisfaction of the desires looks better than the money. It is not at all that we are afraid we shall not develop wants enough to make our old age happy, for when we worry about our declining years it is for fear we shall be in the poorhouse, wanting everything. If, having ordinary prudence, we let go of money that we ought to keep—of all our income and something more—it is apt to be either because we expect to have a larger income presently, or a more convenient chance to save. That neither of these expectations is well founded makes little difference. Our expenditure depends partly on what we have, but largely on how we feel, and that is why in pros-

perous times extravagance soon outruns even prosperity. In such times people actually have more to spend and spend it; but besides that they have inflated expectations, and they spend them too. Get a large proportion of the people of the country to doing that, spending what they have—much more than usual—and part of what they expect to get besides, and of course the demand for what they want quickly begins to strain the supply. Prices go up, everybody has to pay more for everything; and folks on fixed incomes who used to save money can only keep up the habit by increasing self-denial.

One would think that money would be saved in prosperous times when there is plenty of it about. But no, that is not the time when it is saved. It is then that it is spent. Everybody spends it—governments, railroads, corporations, capitalists, housekeepers, house builders, collectors. People expand their wants in such times,

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIVING

and satisfy some of them, and then is when it is most of all impossible to live on anything a year. But after all the money has been spent a few times over and has begun to be scarce, and borrowing has come to be a serious matter, and folks have much less to spend and no expectations, then everybody groans and begins to save, not only trying desperately to squeeze back inside of the bounds of income, but to pay back what was spent in expectation of a time when saving would have become convenient.

To most of us that time never comes. And yet there are things for which we spend more than we can afford, that really do justify our expenditures, so that after the money has been spent and we are pinched for the lack of it, we would still rather have what it bought than have the money back.

It does not appear that Ebenezer Webster and his courageous wife ever re-

gretted the excesses of expenditure which they incurred in buying education for their sons Ezekiel and Daniel. If they had been willing to get what they could out of the two boys, and limit them to such advantages as they could reasonably afford, they might have had a vastly easier approach to old age. But Daniel seemed likely in his mental parts, and Ebenezer—coming into the profitable employment of side justice of the Common Pleas, with a three- or four-hundred-dollar increase of income just as Daniel reached school age—succumbed miserably to temptation and sent Daniel off to Exeter to school, and later to Dartmouth College. And Daniel, no thriftier than his father, no sooner got a fair bite of education himself than he insisted that his dear elder brother, Ezekiel, should also partake of the expensive dainty. The whole family went on into further extravagance and resulting debt and hard-

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIVING

ship to qualify the other boy to rise in life. It made very hard work for Ebenezer and his wife. Neither they nor the boys themselves ever got over it. Ebenezer died at sixty-seven a worked-out man, bequeathing to his son Daniel, then a country lawyer, who supported him in his closing years, a legacy of debts. But he had had the gratification of seeing Daniel's progress through school and college and to the bar, and had heard him make his first speech in court. He seems never to have wanted back the money he had expended on him. The mother lived ten years longer. When she died in Ezekiel's house, Daniel had come to be a member of Congress. Neither did she want the money back. By the time Daniel inherited his father's debts he already had debts of his own, for having nothing to start with, he was a borrower from the beginning. He finally paid the father's debts, but getting used to debt



## ON ANYTHING A YEAR

early in life, he formed a habit of it, which he kept up to the end of his days, and which was a great sorrow and expense to his friends, though not entirely without consolations to himself. But not even this distressing habit or the embarrassing propensity to have what he wanted at all times whether he could pay for it or not, availed, so far as appears, to make him regret that expensive taste for education in his father which was the root of the whole difficulty.

So sometimes it does seem to pay to plunge into expenditures that one's income does not really warrant. The chance to educate young Daniel was a now-or-never opportunity. Education can be deferred, but not very long, and the need of catching it while it is still attainable is one of the commonest reasons why anything a year is impossible to live on. The other reasons are apt to be akin to this one. If we are decently

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIVING

provident we are slow to commit excesses of expenditure for things we can postpone, but much readier to commit them to secure what looks like a great investment, or a great bargain, on which we have only a fleeting option. We want the things which we shall lose forever if we don't strain a point and get them now; the house that will be indispensable in a year or two, and is so much cheaper now, and then all the things that go with it and that belong to living in it. The having things to match and making the details of living conform to the general scale and scope that we affect are astonishing allurements to the expenditures that exceed income.

Most insidious of all is the perfectly natural propensity to want and to cultivate associates and friends that suit us, to keep in touch with old friends whom we like, and to gather unto ourselves such new ones as day-to-day life may offer.

## ON ANYTHING A YEAR

That comes to having a place in the world and keeping it, and when one has, or thinks he has, a place worth keeping, and one that his children may like when he has finished with it, he does not immediately let go his hold on it because beef goes up five cents a pound, or eggs ten cents a dozen. It is worth a good deal to be a social being with habitual relations with one's fellow beings, and command of machinery to facilitate them; life is pleasanter so; but it tends to restrict liberty and promptness of action, and to retard changes and economies that may in themselves be clearly advisable.

If we have perched too high, and must come down, it is much less rasping to have company in the descent. When a flock of birds leave a tree and descend upon a field, it is a pretty sight and cheerful; but when one poor bird is knocked off a limb by a missile, it hurts, and is depressing. It was said in perfect sober-

ness six months ago that there was acute discomfort among folks who had been reduced from affluence to fifty thousand a year. But it helped them, no doubt, to feel that they had so many companions in economy. When everybody is shaken down by the same jolt, all keep their relative positions, and that is a profound solace.

Ah, well, when incomes all around cease to be adjustable to the scale of living, the scale of living has to be adjusted to incomes. Diamond dealers in New York are in trouble because nobody is buying diamonds, and Washington says that champagne is about to be marked down twenty per cent. Vainly the snare is set in the sight of the bird. We have all repented, and what we want now is not cheaper diamonds or cheaper champagne, but cheaper milk and eggs and meat and cheaper Bibles.

## RICHES

CHRISTMAS this year comes at the end of a twelvemonth in which public attention has been drawn with unusual persistence to the ardour of sundry of our fellow countrymen in the pursuit of gain. Legislators, courts, and investigating committees have taken cognizance of it. Moralists are everywhere moralizing about it. It is not the struggles of needy persons to make a living that excite remark, but the urgent efforts of people not perceptibly threatened with want to gather to themselves very considerable annual aggregations of dross. In many conspicuous instances investigations have seemed to disclose in men of most respectable standing such a lack of scruple and delicacy in money-getting as seems to betoken an overestimation of the value

## RICHES

of riches as compared with other precious things. Impressed by these signs of the times, the clergy rehearse "the Apostle's affectionate and solemn warning against the haste to be rich." A college president finds Americans confronted by a situation due to lack of moral principle, and avers that greed for gain and greed for power have blinded men to the old-time distinctions between right and wrong. A banker of national reputation declares to fellow bankers in convention that dishonesty in high places gravely threatens the future of the country, and that the restoration of the old, rigid standards of honesty and uprightness is indispensable to our defence against socialism. And the root of all this evil is the desire for riches! It is a curious yearning, wholesome, like hunger, up to a certain point, but more prone than hunger to run to a dangerous excess. Undoubtedly if as a people we better understood riches, their

## RICHES

relative value, and the limitations of their usefulness, we should be a better people than we are, and honester. Incidentally, we should be better equipped to keep Christmas in a fit spirit, for since men and money are the chief valuables on earth, a diminished solicitude about money would leave a larger share of our strength and time to be occupied by solicitude about men.

It is foolish to undervalue money, and just as foolish to overvalue it. All of us—practically all—know that one can have too little, most of us believe that it is possible to have just about enough, and some of us are growing firm in the suspicion that it is possible to have so much that it is a nuisance, and the responsibility for it and its increase a disabling burden. Fortunes that are so enormous as to make their owners a legitimate object of the commiseration of thoughtful people are rather a new thing

## RICHES

in this country, but they have really come. Enough really is as good as too much. It sounds emotional and argumentative to say so, but it is so.

The condition of having too little money is too familiar to need exposition. The great majority of people have too little money, and would be better off and happier if they had more and spent it. The condition of having about enough offers better points for discussion. There is no arbitrary sum or income that is enough. What is enough for one person is not enough for another, and what means ease and affluence in one condition of life would mean poverty in another. What is enough depends upon the individual, his education, his aspirations, his environment, the size of his family, and the possibilities that are in him. Anthony Hope in a recent story makes one of his characters observe that there is more difference between three thousand pounds a



## RICHES

year and nothing than there is between three thousand pounds a year and all the rest of the money in the world. A family can live a certain kind of lazy, pleasant country life in England on about three thousand pounds a year, and a fairly prudent man who wants to live that sort of life is about as well off on a sure income of that size as he would be if he had a great deal more.

Of course, standards of living vary enormously; the privilege of familiar association with certain kinds of people is expensive. There may be places you cannot live in to advantage, and people you cannot play with to advantage, for much less than fifty thousand dollars a year. If you are a fool, and have no particular standard of living of your own, and your happiness depends on having what other people have and doing what other people do, and if it is necessary to you that those other people shall be people of the

## RICHES

first fashion, of course there is no saying how much will be enough for you. Sad to say, we are almost all a little foolish about wanting to have what our associates have, and in wanting to include among our associates pleasant, decorative people whose maintenance is expensive. But if we are only moderately foolish, and have some hard sense to fall back on, and some standards of our own, and some personal resources for our entertainment, there will be an imaginable income for each of us that will be about enough. Rich people, who are used to the refinements and material luxuries of life, command some exceedingly valuable privileges. They can marry when they get ready, live comfortably, have servants who save their time and strength, exercise hospitality, raise as many children as they find practicable or convenient, educate them in the best schools, and give them a fair start in life. They can command a certain amount of

## RICHES

leisure, can travel, and to a certain extent can be their own masters. A moderate annual income, varying according to the locality, will pay for all these advantageous privileges in their simpler forms. Anthony Hope's three thousand pounds a year will do it; easily in some places; with good management anywhere. Such an income commands for a family pretty much all the great advantages of condition that are in the market, and most of the highly desirable things can be had for a great deal less. Parents who command such an income can do everything for three or four children that is to their advantage up to the time they marry, and can even provide them with modest incomes of their own when they set up for themselves. Heads of American families, with not more than four children, and with incomes of fifteen thousand dollars a year, have got so nearly as much money as is good for them that they

## RICHES

can well afford to be particular about what they do to make their incomes bigger.

But fifteen thousand dollars a year is not riches. Most of our countrymen whose efforts to be hastily rich have met with so much recent reprobation have long ago passed the fifteen thousand dollars a year point, and would deride the idea of such an income being about enough. What they plan and plot and sweat and gamble and finally squirm to acquire, is an income that bears no real relation to anything that can fairly be called a need, and an aggregation of capital that will produce such an income. There is no such thing in our day as being rich beyond the dreams of avarice. The dreams of avarice have grown since Dr. Johnson's time; have grown enormously indeed since Dumas wrote of Monte Cristo. Our contemporary idea of riches begins about where Dr. Johnson left off.

## RICHES

A good big fortune is an interesting phenomenon, and a very interesting factor in civilization. I should be sorry to see big fortunes go so much out of fashion that nobody would any longer care to heap one up. If nobody built palaces, and made a market for the larger sizes of diamonds and the best pictures, and navigated the sea in big yachts and the land in automobiles thirty feet long,—if nobody, so to speak, had money to throw at birds, and threw it, life would not be nearly so lively and decorative as it is. I had almost rather, if I were quit of all personal responsibility about it, that some people *hogged* great fortunes than that there should be none. And I had a great deal rather that a due provision of big fortunes should be acquired in fit ways by fit men. Few of us, I think, object to big fortunes *per se*. We do not want too great a proportion of the national wealth to get into too few hands, as has happened

## RICHES

already, and is happening more and more. We do not want our laws, or the breach of them, to give an unfair advantage to the very rich who want to be richer, at the cost of the poor. But to fortunes legitimately won by men fit to win them, who merely levy lawful tribute on benefits conferred on the community, we have no objection at all. Such fortunes are the signs of general prosperity. We like to see them grow, and admire the spending of them in the same spirit in which we admire the lavish diffusion of sunshine. There is no objection to riches, then, provided the right men gather them in the right ways.

Who, then, are the right men, and what ways are legitimate?

There are a good many people who are of some consequence in the world if they are rich, and of very little consequence if they are not. One cannot blame such people for trying to get rich.

## RICHES

Riches mean so much to them! They are their only means of advertisement. They win them consideration. They put them in the way of being amused and entertained. It is a profound satisfaction to them to have money, even though they do not spend it. They may even find pleasure in giving it away. If by saving and bargaining and hard work and shrewd investment they can get together fortunes, let us wish them joy of them. Their money is capital if they do not spend it, and it is apt to do somebody some good if they do. If they hand it down to their descendants, there goes with it the power to command leisure and education and a choice of service, and possibly among the descendants there may be some who will use such powers to advantage. Accumulated money which enables lucky individuals of the rising generation to get a thorough preparation for the work of life, and which relieves

## RICHES

some individuals altogether from the necessity of earning money, may be of vast service to a country like ours which every day abounds more in work most necessary to be well done,—work which no man who must earn his living can do without great sacrifices.

By process of accumulation and investment a good many people of moderate ability and saving habits get lawfully rich in a humdrum way without making any stir about it. There is no fault to be found with them. The other great group of lawful fortune builders are the great leaders of industry; the great financiers, the great railroad builders, the great traders and manufacturers. With such men, after they have progressed a certain distance, money usually becomes more an incident of activity than an aim. When they have won abundant fortunes, they still go on, not because they greatly care for more money, but because things of



## RICHES

the sort they have been doing are the only interesting things they know how to do. Their lives are permanently shaped, and they must live them out actively on the lines laid down by their past, or be laid off and rust. When they undertake new enterprises, they try to provide that they shall be profitable, not necessarily because they want more money, but because it is one of the rules of the game they play that enterprises they put hand to shall be profitable. A great commercial enterprise that does not pay is a machine that will not work. It is a failure, and there is no fun in failures.

To these born chieftains of commerce it comes natural to get rich. They take it in their stride. The money-making habit is apt to run away with them, and concentration on one great phase of endeavour is apt to leave the remnant of atrophied powers that one sees in most specialists. The need often felt of fight-

## RICHES

ing the devil with fire breeds in them a disposition to fight with fire when the opponent is not the devil. The great fortune builders are usually not absolutely nice in their methods, and some of them are rascals. Out on the rascals! but for the rest, we must judge them by the standard of bridge builders and not of watch-makers. If they are true money-makers; if they create wealth and not merely divert it and sweat it, there is no cause to grudge them the tribute they levy.

A valuable thing in a family is one of these colossal money-makers. Time was when we used to believe the adage about its being three generations from shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves. I do not think it was ever literally sound, for though in earlier days the accumulations of a fortune builder often ran pretty well out before his grandchildren got through with them, the third generation seldom got back to manual labor. A fortune in a

## RICHES

family raises the standard of living and of expectation for that family, forms for it associations of worldly advantage, and teaches it a good many things that are of value. The members of a family that has once been pulled out of the ruck of humanity in that way, and kept out for a considerable time, are apt to make a hard fight to hold the place they have had. They may get back to work; they usually do; but it is apt to be a more profitable grade of work than is commonly done in shirt-sleeves.

Moreover, the great fortunes of this generation are so enormous that there is no visible prospect of shirt-sleeves for the heirs of them. Fortunes of even fifty millions will stand a great deal of foolishness in young heirs, and most of the heirs of such fortunes who come under contemporary observation are not particularly foolish about dissipating money. Some of them are shrewd and ambitious, and

## RICHES

give more concern as money-getters than as money-spenders, and others merely find their incomes ample for such amusements and expenditures as they crave, and live within them.

So there are people who seem fit to gather riches, some because that seems as profitable a use as any to make of their time, others because riches are a natural incident of valuable services that they have had the talent and the energy to render. It is the money-getting of the unfit that makes the scandals. The money the various kinds of gamblers get is simply diverted from other holders; the money the grafters get is stolen from the people; the money made out of franchises corruptly obtained is of the same sort. The patent medicine money has a very fragile claim to respect; the money made by skinning stockholders or policy-holders is dear at the price; and so, generally, is the profit that results from the transfer of

## RICHES

worthless articles—be they stocks, mines, patent medicine, tips, or what—for a valuable consideration. What we need to keep us straight in our money-getting enterprises is a high valuation of conduct and character as compared with riches, and a sincere appreciation that it makes more for happiness to do good work, especially if it is done for good pay, than to get hold of money without rendering a due equivalent.

We are not so universally money-mad as we may seem. The elder Agassiz was not the only man in this country who ever felt that he had not time to make money. The longing for riches is not universally a predominant passion. Thousands of men feel that money-getting is not primarily their calling, and would not leave the work they love and pay the price in time and concentrated effort if ever so good a chance was offered them of a fortune honestly won. The man in

## RICHES

whom the money-hunger is so strong and effectual that he is willing to devote his life to satisfying it is a very exceptional man. Most of us hate to save, and the pleasure or profit of the hour looks bigger to us than that of the remote future. Moreover, to almost all the leading preachers, doctors, and schoolmasters, and to many of the editors, painters, architects, engineers, lawyers, and big politicians, money, though important, is a secondary consideration. They want to make a living, and much prefer that it shall be a good one, but professional success and reputation is of more value to them than superfluous riches. And why not! Is it not a much more satisfying thing to be a living force, master of a great profession or a great art, or a public leader, than to be merely the possessor of riches?

The great check on the value of riches to any man is that we human creatures

## RICHERS

have only one set of time, one body, one mind, and one soul, a piece. We all, no matter what our means are, have the use of twenty-four hours, and no more, every day. About eight hours we have to sleep. How we shall invest the other sixteen is the great problem of our lives. We can only do one set of things in any given period of time. If we have a million dollars a year, we can do things that we cannot do on one thousand, or ten, or twenty thousand a year. They will be different things, but there is no assurance at all that they will be better things or more entertaining, or more useful or improving. And we cannot do both. If we put in our one set of time in a million-dollar occupation, we have to forego most of the thousand-dollar occupations. If we trail around Europe in an automobile, we cannot be at home reading books, and working at our trade or in our garden, or talking to our friends. Our good

## RICHES

friend with a million dollars a year cannot eat much more or better food, or drink much more or better drinks, than we can. If he does, he will be sorry. He can have more places to live in, and enormously more and handsomer apparatus of living, but he cannot live in more than one place at once, and too much apparatus is a bother. He can make himself comfortable, and live healthfully. So can we. He can have all the leisure he wants, can go where he likes, and stay as long as he will. He has the better of us there. We have the better of him in having the daily excitement and discipline of making a living. It is a great game,—that game of making a living,—full of chances and hazards, hopes, surprises, thrills, disappointments, and satisfactions. Our million-a-year friend misses that. We may beat him in discipline, too. We are apt to get, more than he does, the salutary discipline of steady



## RICHES

work, of self-denial, of effort. That is enormously valuable to soul, body, and mind. He can't buy it. We get it thrown in with our daily bread.

We are as likely to marry to our taste and live happily in the domesticated state as he is. We have rather better chances than he of raising our children well. We are as likely as he to have good friends worth having, and to find pleasure in them. Great riches tend to limit their possessors to the society of people who are rich, not because the rich love the rich better than they do other folks, but because their scale and habits of living usually take them where the rich people are, or where the poorer people cannot conveniently sojourn. If the steam-yacht people play more or less with other steam-yacht people in the yachting season, it is because the steam-yacht people are there, and the other people are not. At any rate, in this country great riches seem

## RICHES

more likely to limit their possessors' command of agreeable society than to extend it.

Another trouble about some of our extremely rich people is that no definite job goes with their money. If they choose, they can invest everything they have in such a way as to have no responsibility about the management of any business, and nothing to do except to gather in their dividend checks and spend or reinvest their money. That is one result of incorporating all the great businesses of the country. When money necessarily went into land, the rich had duties that were incident to their possessions. They might neglect them, but they had them. Now they can easily manage so as to have no duties connected with property that an efficient clerk cannot transact. If they do so manage, it leaves them rather lonely and unimportant, outside the great current of human

## RICHES

hopes and activities. If they do not like that, and insist on touching elbows with their fellows, there is no way for it but to butt into the game, take chances and risks, make sacrifices of ease and leisure, and work like poor people.

Great riches, carrying with them enormous possibilities of self-indulgence, may fairly be considered as a sort of poison which ruins a certain proportion of those who are exposed to it, though strong constitutions survive. As rum destroys savages, so wealth tends to destroy persons—especially young ones—whom use and training have not gradually made immune to its effects. How that is, may readily be noticed in observing the effects of newly won wealth on the families of the winners. It is a rare man, and usually one very much blessed in his wife, who can combine with the ability that wins him riches the sagacity to train children born in comparative poverty so

## RICHES

that they will benefit by a rapid and radical improvement in his circumstances.

Another drawback to riches is that, the two things that most of us most dread being poverty and that spiritual ruin which we call damnation, the elimination of poverty takes away a buffer, and, leaving damnation our only great bugbear, brings the dread of it unpleasantly near. Not this drawback, though, nor fears for our children, nor any of the other objections to being rich, so fiercely daunt us but that our fortitude is easily equal to the perils of all of them if honourable affluence comes our way. It is enough if we realize that riches, whatever their charm and their value, are not a panacea for the evils of life; that happiness depends on work, health, character, disposition, training, and a great many other things besides income, and that, so far as happiness is concerned, enough money, or somewhat less than enough, puts us in

## RICHES

just about as good a case to achieve it as though we were rich. To live our lives, to get out what is in us, to do our share of the world's work, and live brotherly with our fellows—that is what we are here for. If riches are an incident of that course of life, they are a good incident. If the chase after them lures us away from the fulfilment of our primary obligations to our Maker, our neighbour, and ourselves, we are certainly losers by it: losers if it fails; losers not less if, succeeding, we lose the Christmas out of our year, the Christmas spirit out of our lives.

*December, 1905.*

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

A NEW ENGLANDER, who has come back to visit Massachusetts after living twenty years in Idaho and Washington (state), writes to a Massachusetts paper that he finds many and great changes, but nothing so wonderful as the changed religious conditions. He recalls that just before he left home his mother's brother went over to the Roman Catholic Church, and he remembers the resulting consternation in the family. Now, visiting a near relative of his father, he is told that the likeliest son of the family is engaged to marry an Irish girl, a Catholic, and as a preliminary to marriage is under instruction by a priest with a view of joining the Roman Catholic Church. "I asked the father," he says, "if it was by his consent. His reply was, 'To be sure,

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

and with his mother's consent as well. In fact, when we remember that we have two sons so taken up with business and lodge duties as to have no time or care for church, and one of them divorced twice, and a daughter devoted to Christian Science, we regard the girl in the case as a means of grace from God for the boy.'" The boy being questioned, said: "I am going to be a Catholic, but what of it? I am only returning to the Church that made good Christians out of our forefathers before we were left at the mercy of every curbstone orator with a message."

No wonder the homing New Englander was astonished at the changes he found in religious conditions. Such an attitude as that in New England parents of the old stock towards the Roman Catholic Church is fit to stir reflection. The reasons for it are briefly indicated in the little story. It was much that the boy's

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

parents liked the girl, but the two sons who had no time for church (though one of them had found time to be twice divorced) and the Christian Science daughter were the powerful factors in reconciling the parents to the other boy's course. The parents did not like the character that was making in their family and were willing to try a new prescription for the cure of New England souls. The observer who reports the case says it may be an unusual one, and that he would not write about it if it were not that he had attended service in seventeen churches since he had been East, and "the handful present in each" made him want to stir New England up to develop "a more united, vigourous, intelligent, and Christian Protestantism, and then come West and help us."

It is no trouble to guess that some kind of religion is going to grow vigourously in our country, and that if the prevailing



## CHARACTER AND MONEY

forms of Protestantism don't hold their old fields and do their old work something else will take their place. There must be something to shape character and hold it true to a standard. Out of the ethical disturbance which has prevailed so fiercely of late—the dissatisfaction with the methods which have lately brought commercial success, the concern at the increase of divorce, the discussion of socialism, and the disposition to experiment with various new laws to restrain the powers of the powerful and the avarice of the greedy—there is likely to result some closer examination by perplexed but conservative persons of the means of regulating human character from the inside. . People, like the relatives of the man who wrote the letter to the Massachusetts paper, who have taken some pains to raise some children, are instinctively interested in the permanency of their line. They want their children

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

not only to do well, but to reproduce their kind, an orderly, faithful kind, cleaving to righteousness, that will keep alive in the earth.

Which lasts longer in a family, character or money? It is not quite a simple question, because money sometimes lasts pretty well and character sometimes runs out, and because families in which character is strong are apt, first or last, to develop their share of successful money-getters. Nevertheless, though it often seems as if there was nothing like a handsome pot of money for establishing a family on a firm basis, I think character beats money in keeping families alive. Sound stocks are wonderfully durable and last through adversities till better times come round. Of that there are interesting evidences to be gathered by wholesale from the story of the South since the Civil War. New England has had character, not only for home use, but for wide distribution.

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

She has scattered it Westward as far as the land stretches. It has brought her children so much money that one wonders whether she has not cashed in too much of it.

Indeed it is a fair question whether American character generally—there is no reason to single out New England—has not been much too extensively cashed in. If we have got the money and no longer have the character, we are undoubtedly poorer for the trade, and less likely to last and hold our own in the world.

And the case is all the worse if it is true that the old machinery, and especially the religious machinery, by which character used to be moulded and strengthened, has broken down. There is no use at all—is there?—in raising families of children who will spend money, scoot about in devil wagons, shirk work, and get divorces whenever the mood strikes them. There is small profit for the human race in folks of that sort, and not much in that other

sort whose representatives are deadly bent on pecuniary gain, no matter how. The Americans are intelligent and very ambitious. If American character is running out or being cashed in at a rate that imperils the perpetuation of the great, national American family, it must be that they will be smart enough to see it and to give attention strenuously to the cultivation of fidelity and righteousness, as valuables more indispensable to permanency than dividend-paying securities, or even cash. And if, for example, the Americans conclude that they have got to have more religion if they are to keep their moral health, they certainly will have it, though just what particular brand of Christian religion it will be I do not know.

It is very wholesome and encouraging for any one who lives in a great city where all the apparatus of wealth and extravagant living is constantly paraded before him, to take in a village newspaper from

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

somewhere and regularly read its local news, that brings constantly home to him the simpler life conserved in its simplicity by circumstances that are stronger than whim or preference. After we have bent our minds a good deal to the consideration of such newspaper questions as whether \$50,000 a year is as large a salary as any insurance company's president ought to be paid, it is wholesome for us to be reminded how very small a corner of our national world is practically affected by such questions, and how overwhelming in comparative numbers is the crowd whose life from beginning to end is maintained on incomes much too insignificant to embarrass anybody's reflections. It is the life of that great crowd of average people that is important to a country. The rich people and the earners or winners of the fifty-thousand-dollar incomes are chiefly important in their relation to that larger mass.

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

But that relation is important. The more prospered people in our country include a large share of the country's natural leadership and management. For about forty years—since the Civil War—getting rich has been about the most attractive exercise that has offered in this country. Conditions have been wonderfully favourable to it. Since the slavery question was settled no general political issue has arisen that has matched it in power to compel the attention and devotion of citizens. The most aggressive and ablest of our people have bent their energies to the commercial development of the country and to the gathering of the riches attending it, without serious, wholesale distraction to ethical or political concerns. The pecuniary rewards of their efforts have been so enormous that money-getting has overshadowed all the other objects of endeavour.

The successful business man and his

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

heirs have come to sit at the head of the table, and the chief and most profitable concern of most of the other workers has come to be to minister unto them. The whole group of professional workers has dropped in the social scale relatively to the successful men of affairs. The rise in the scale of living and the very great increase in the cost of it, have made poor men of the judges, the college professors, the schoolmasters, the officers of the army and navy, the ministers, and most of the lawyers and the doctors. The doctors have kept their place better than any of the other professional men, because their profession is constantly growing in importance, but the profession of law has progressed a long way toward being a mere money-getting business, and has lost in independence and in attractiveness to aspiring men. The man who is most sure nowadays that he has chosen a good trade in which the shining hours

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

will duly profit him seems to be the stock broker. "Don't make a lawyer of your boy," said an admirable lawyer the other day; "make a banker of him. That is the only trade that is egregiously overpaid just now."

We see then that for years the current toward money-making has set very strong and run very deep, and somewhat to the detriment of the occupations in which money-making is only an important incident and not the central aim. Is there anything at work to check that tendency and foster a better distribution of the talent and best brains of the country so that some necessary works that seem neglected just now may get better attention? I think there are such influences moving. There has been so much money slopped about of very recent years that everybody is getting pretty well used to it, and its possession no longer excites the awe that it did when large collections of it were scarcer. Big



## CHARACTER AND MONEY

people with big incomes make money respected, but little people with big incomes tend to make it more or less derided. So many kinds of Americans have got money nowadays that the most convenient method of classifying them has come to be to divide them all into two groups, those who still live with their wives and those who don't. When we see people made happy, according to our standards of happiness, by pecuniary enlargement, it disposes us toward special effort after pecuniary enlargement for ourselves and our children, but when we see people whose struggles and sacrifices have brought them money to the detriment of their conduct and their reputations, and see them having no fun that is attractive to us, it disposes us towards contentment with a humbler pecuniary lot.

Can it be denied that examples of this latter sort have been lavished on us? Into what extraordinary female depositories

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

have we lately seen the loot of cities sink! In other lands men of great possessions go to courts to confer with kings, but here they go to court and go again to testify where they got what they have and whose it was. It seems a wearing life. And the Wall Street end of it, the "big men" who buy when stocks are low, and loose the purse strings of the banks, inviting speculation, and sell at the top—it seems a bit sordid; and the Newport end of it, which may indeed have its fair aspects and its pleasures, seems a bit aimless. Is the Newport habit worth any wise person's efforts to attain for himself? Would he covet it for his children? Is it worth while to be a broker in order to bring up a son to that calling? Somehow, of very recent years, our more fortunate fellow-citizens seem not to have made good. Their felicities excite more derision than envy. It even seems as if the impression were being diffused that a considerably

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

better life than theirs is within the reach of talent and character and energy, a life far less expensive but with very much more substantial satisfactions.

The more the impression gets about that headlong money-getting is not in its final results all that it has been cracked up to be, and that there are more remunerative ways of putting in one's life, the more diversion we may hope to see of the energies of able young men to other employments. Especially we may hope that of the young men of brains who have money enough—as many of them now have by inheritance—more and more will be constrained to use their powers and the leisure their fortunes give them rather for the raising of the standard of character, integrity, and morality in the country, than for its commercial development. There is no danger that commercial development will be neglected. That is too highly paid a service ever to be overlooked.

## CHARACTER AND MONEY

But the other form of service needs cultivation. To think sound thoughts and diffuse them, to raise the standards of conduct and to help make them effective—those are labours of the first importance to the country, and yet not likely to be bountifully paid for in money. It is true the schoolmaster is abroad, but the curbstone orator with a message dogs his heels, and the message, misleading as it may be, stands a good chance to be received if there is a dearth of strong voices to speak a better.

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

It is a current custom in many of the colleges to gather the new students at the beginning of the year and set forth the most judicious gentlemen obtainable to bid them welcome and make wise discourse to them about the new world they have come into, and how they may best assimilate its best offerings. They do this every fall at Harvard, and last October President Eliot, coming as the last of the speakers who addressed the newcomers in the Sanders Theater, imparted to them some true and timely ideas about being gentlemen in the democratic fashion proper to this untrammelled land. Discussing the characteristics of a gentleman in democratic society, he submitted that he should be gentle of speech, quiet of demeanour, a serene person who does not

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

bluster, or bustle, or hurry, or vociferate, but who pays attention with the intent mind which is requisite to effectiveness. And he accorded him the disposition to see the superiorities in persons rather than their inferiorities, and a preference for the society of his superiors. And he held that he should have a generous spirit, conforming his life to his resources, avoiding both lavishness and parsimony. He should be considerate, too, especially toward those who are in any way in his power, and should scrupulously avoid hurting any one weaker than himself. He even denied him the precious privilege of being lazy. His democratic gentleman must be a power, a worker, a disinterested labourer in the service of others; not a weakling or a mere pleasure-seeker, but a strong and hard-working man. There are five grades of scholarship at Harvard. The middle grade is "C." Dr. Eliot quoted a remark that he had

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

heard, that the gentleman's mark was "C." "Can there be," he said, "a stuper or falser idea of a gentleman than that? He is not to be an effective and strong worker, not to be a man with a strong grip and high purpose, but an indifferent, good-for-nothing, luxurious person idling through the precious years of college life!"

The best that can be said for the foolish notion that "C" is "the gentleman's mark" is that "C" is a better mark than "D," and at least implies that the young gentleman is paying enough attention to his scholastic duties to maintain his connection with the college. Moreover, I suppose that there are a good many young fellows in a big college, who, while they care little about marks or academic honours, and are content if in their scholarship they are merely safe, are by no means good-for-nothing, nor mere luxurious idlers, but are true, if leisurely, seekers

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

after education, and are getting in fair measure what they seek. At Oxford they think a good deal of the civilizing usefulness of the university life more or less irrespective of academic distinctions. Mr. Rhodes was strongly impressed with the value of it when he endowed the Rhodes' scholarships, as to which, and their purpose, an Oxford correspondent says in a recent letter to the *London Telegraph*: "Oxford teaches a lesson which no young community learns—the truth, namely, that education is not exclusively or mainly intellectual, but social and moral, in the best sense of the word, a discipline in the way to live. I am not sure that the German will ever find this out, but the American and the Colonial cannot fail to gain therefrom much advantage." Now it is conceivable, however unlikely, that some of Dr. Eliot's young men who are content with "C's" are learning this lesson in so far as the



## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

institution they frequent can impart it. Moreover, is it not true that there is more than one process of development, and that while one likely youth begins with efficiency and diligence and gradually adds to them sweetness and light and grace, another of a different nature and less energetic may acquire grace earlier, and diligence and efficiency by a slower and more gradual process. It seems to me that I have seen both of these processes in action, that I have known grade "A" men who seemed cold-hearted in their youth to develop sympathies and sweetness in their maturity, and lads who were genial and lazy in college to acquire, under constraint of necessity or ambition, habits of pertinacious diligence in later life.

Moreover, I notice that Pastor Wagner, in the treatise that is just now so warmly pressed upon the attention of mankind, lays stress upon the value of joyousness, and urges the cultivation of it as one of

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

the things that are indispensable to profitable living. Maybe some of our young grade "C" brethren are cultivating joyousness, and laying up some store of it against a day when they may be too busy to play. Dr. Eliot has said that the thing that more commonly than any other thing checks the development of men's minds is the necessity of making a living. That pursuit is as apt to check the cultivation of joyousness as of any other branch of the humanities.

A big college is a microcosm, and many men of many minds are seeking various things there. There are some other good things to be had there, as the Oxford correspondent says, besides the intellectual training. These other good things are much more likely to be added to the good scholars than to the poor ones, but it would be a pity if the good scholars monopolized them all. I don't think they do. In a big college like Harvard

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

one considerable class of students are working for their immediate bread and butter. If they do well enough in their studies, they get scholarships while they are in college, and find good chances to earn their livings as soon as they get out. With this group, already facing the serious work of life, the motive for immediate exertion is somewhat stronger than with the other large group whose circumstances are easier. If the poorer youths are apt to beat most of the richer ones in marks, it is because they need to, and because they are exposed to fewer and less alluring distractions. On the social side of college life the richer youths have rather the better chance, and it is a chance to acquire some things that are valuable. I suppose it really pays some Harvard undergraduates to divert time and strength from scholastic duties to the Sisyphean task of gaining ground against Yale, or trying to provide—against experience—

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

that a Harvard boat shall be more swiftly propelled down the Thames River than a similar boat from New Haven. And the social opportunities, the chance to live the life of the place, to like and be liked, to gossip, to discuss, to invite one's soul, surely they are valuable, too. I am not sure that the grade "C" man who, without physical or moral sacrifices, duly improves them, does not get as much out of college as he would have got if he had studiously neglected them for "B's" or even "A's." What he should do is to improve his social opportunities without neglecting his scholastic ones, and if he is able enough and has character enough he will.

"The precious years of college life," as Dr. Eliot calls them, are precious for more reasons than one. First or last, it is profitable to have time to think. A grade "C" man who thinks—if any of them do think—may profit more by his mental operations than a grade "B" who thinks

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

less but gets better marks. And shall there not be time for the heart to swell and the imagination to expand? If we are going to have old men who dream dreams, must we not have young men who see visions? And unless our young men see visions and our old men dream dreams, what difference do we make or shall we ever make, in this world? If I thought that a reasonable proportion of the grade "C" men were using their spare time in developing the spiritual quality, I would not worry overmuch about their marks. For it is that, the spiritual quality, which not only gives grace and charm to the democratic gentleman, but is an element of intelligence indispensable to any very high success. The men who lack it either cannot bring themselves to want the higher kind of success or cannot win it.

And what is it? It is not piety in the common sense; it is not necessarily re-

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

ligiousness; but though it may be consistent with any kind of religion, I do not understand how it can be consistent with none. It may qualify the strenuous life with all its vigorous physical and mental activities, or it may sustain and stimulate energies much less profuse. It is consistent with shrewdness and the money-getting gift, and with indifference to money; with thrift and with pecuniary carelessness; with ambition and with modesty; with great powers and with lesser ones; but hardly with stupidity, for it is itself a quality of intelligence. Let us call it a certain grasp and comprehension of certain truths, the knowledge of which is revealed to some babes, and denied to some of the learned; which comes more by conduct than by study, and more perhaps by breeding, or the grace of God, than either. Emerson had it. Lincoln had it. Roosevelt has it, jostled in among a crowd of other qualities, and it is one

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

thing that makes him hard to beat. McKinley had it, and the shrewd Hanna recognized it in him. It is pretty hard for a man to get to the White House without it, for it is an inspiring quality which human instinct recognizes, and to which in our country a vast concourse of voters are responsive. Some very able and ambitious politicians have ultimately failed in leadership precisely for the reason that they lacked it, and the people found them out and would not follow them. Other exceedingly able politicians lacking or losing this quality, have ceased to be able to aspire, and have turned away from the service of the people because they could not prize such rewards as it brought them. As American political parties stand now, it might be possible for the Republicans to elect a President in whom this quality was not especially apparent, but if there is to be another successful Democratic leader who

## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

is to draw a majority of our voters unto him, he must have it. It is indispensable. No man will do who does not possess, and has not demonstrated that he possesses, this spiritual quality of comprehending truth and acting, step by step, on his comprehension of it. No certified candidate, no sterilized ticket, will help the Democrats. Their coming leader must not only be possessed and borne along by the truth that is in him, but it must be sound and timely truth, the sort that will make the country whole; not distract it.

It is idle to cry out against materialism, unless you offer something in place of it. The country will never really despond because it is getting too rich. None of us want to be any poorer than we can help except a very few of us who have a great deal too much money. And they don't seem to want to—not in real earnest—although some of them talk about it.



## THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY

But lots of us will forego excessive solicitude for material gains if we can get anything that fills us more to our satisfaction. Nature abhors a vacuum. If ideals are lacking, material things must fill the void. But the only men who are really good at getting political ideals into marketable shape and making them seem profitable to voters are men who have this spiritual quality, who take counsel of the spirit, who have insight, and who do what they see, not for effect, but because they must; because their very blood constrains them; because they are possessed to act the truth they see, and other goods they might aspire to seem to them uninviting in comparison.

*February, 1905*

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

“NOISE and Canned Food Life’s Reward” was the newspaper headline of a dispatch from Chicago that told of the complaints of an Iowa doctor who came to Chicago last October to a medical convention. He came apparently without sentiments of special animosity toward life as it is lived, but the hotel that he went to assigned him a room that faced a Chicago institution called “the elevated loop,” whereof the incessant noises murdered his sleep and distressed his nerves. Before the convention ended he addressed his medical brethren on existence as he had just found it. We live, he declared, amid shrieks, toots, bells, and yells. Everything is prepared, canned, and condensed. We live in large cities, overwork, overworry, overeat, and under-

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

sleep. We have no time for real rest and relaxation. We tear down as fast, or faster than we build up. We struggle through life day by day. We do not quietly live, but struggle at everything. Even in our play we struggle. We have records to smash in everything, and all must be hurry, noise, and excitement. The baseball game, or the foot-ball game, is not a period of relaxation, but of keen anxiety as to whether the home team will win. Our food is prepared to please the palate rather than to nourish the body. It must be quickly cooked, even if its value as food is lost. Our groceries are adulterated, our meats are embalmed, our butter is laundered. We choose soft foods that don't need to be chewed much. With all out-of-doors to choose abodes from, we huddle into cities, and shutting out the sunshine with a pall of smoke, live crowded and in dirt, dodge trolley cars and automobiles, move from flat to flat,

and never know what peace and quiet are until we reach our graves. What wonder that we are deficient in physical development, that our bones are small, our digestions poor, and that our impractical teeth are crowded into jaws too contracted for them, and that catarrh and other hypertrophies are prevalent.

Is it so bad as all that? I hope not. But good for the Iowa city doctor who relieved so much of his mind and produced so comprehensive a category of complaints against life as we Americans now live it. What are hypertrophies? Do we have them? Why do we have them? We have catarrh, but if noise is so large a part of current life's reward as Dr. Brady says, maybe our catarrhs are a protective dispensation to deafen us against the current din. No doubt life in a hotel bedroom on the elevated loop in Chicago seems a hurried, noisy thing to a beginner. The din of elevated railroads in cities is a

preposterous absurdity. There ought to be rubber tires on the car wheels or rubber cushions under the rails, or something to mitigate it. Nevertheless folks who live within the range of it are said soon to get used even to that. Maybe they live worse or die sooner because of it. I believe it is agreed that life in great cities is exhausting to human material; that the English people, for instance, begins to show serious physical degeneration as the result of the crowded, shaded, and ill-nourished life of a large proportion of it in London and other big cities. Human material was made to be used up, and the idea of cities as the great furnaces where the country-made human coal is shovelled in to make wheels revolve, is not necessarily uneconomical, though it may be worked too hard. It is not to be expected of great cities that their populations shall be wholly self-perpetuating. They must not be Molochs, always absorbing human

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

life and reproducing nothing; but it is legitimate enough that the absorption should exceed the reproduction, and that the difference should be made good, and more, by constant recruiting from outside.

“We struggle through life day by day,” laments the Iowa doctor. “We do not quietly live, but struggle at everything.” But it is no disparagement of life to call it a struggle. Unless it is something of a struggle, it is little worth. To struggle duly and seasonably, with proper periods of preparation, and due spells of rest and true recreation, is the ideal life. Whoever succeeds in eliminating struggle, for himself or his children, out of life succeeds in eliminating the very pith of existence. Without some degree of struggle there is nothing to be had that is of much value; not character, nor eminence in anything worth achieving, nor even any valuable measure of content-

ment. It need not be noisy; it need not be hasty. There need not, as a rule, be more than one day's fair allotment of struggle in a day. For my part, I sympathize with persons who do not want to begin their ordinary day's struggle *too* soon after breakfast, or have it continue later than six o'clock in the afternoon. But some time between one's meals the dial that is adjusted to one's energies should indicate that steam is up, and whatever kind of machinery he happens to have in him should be constrained to show what it can do. How long a daily run his works are equal to depends on the individual. Five hours' struggle is too much for some of us; ten hours' too little for others. Duration of struggle depends, too, on the ardour of it. I find that in foot-ball matches the length of the halves is adjusted to the age and strength of the contestants, and the length of time they have been in training. Young school-

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

boys play ten-minute halves at the beginning of the season and increase perhaps to twenty minutes; whereas, for college lads the halves last half an hour.

The instinctive appreciation that it is true that struggle is a proper part of life is doubtless at the bottom of the patronage we accord to that same violent and objectionable game of foot-ball. We would not put up with it, I am sure, with all its incidents of thumps, broken bones, first aid to the injured, clots on the brain, twisted ankles and noses, hired players, distraction from study, overeagerness to win, spectacularism, and expense, if we had not a deep conviction that struggle was indispensable to our kind of living, and that our kind of living was in the main the best kind for us. About two generations ago, and before that, it was the fashion for merchant princes to have their portraits painted at full length in great magnificence of dressing gowns and



slippers. You see such portraits of benefactors of colleges hanging in college halls. Doubtless those merchants did in their day their share of struggling, but the side of life that they preferred to illustrate in paint was elegant repose. Imagine a successful merchant of our day having his portrait painted in a dressing gown! Was American life less impetuous in those dressing-gown times? I suspect that men struggled just as hard then as now, but life was doubtless less noisy and somewhat more sedate. There was less coal smoke, less clang of steam-engines and machinery, no automobiles, telegraphs, and telephones, and less haste, but a thousand details of life are handier, easier, and more wholesome now than then, and the average duration of life itself is considerably longer. I suspect that it was because American life three generations ago was so amply furnished with hardships that the portrait painters emphasized the dressing-

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

gown-and-slippers side of it, and I suspect that it is because American life has since become so much easier that the struggle side of it is pushed to the fore now.

The faults of foot-ball as we see it are the faults of life as we struggle in it. The great fault with foot-ball is the spirit which actuates some of the players. The great fault of American life is the same. There is no reason why foot-ball should not be generous, honest, and sweet-tempered even though it is rough. There is no reason why our daily struggle should not be generous, honest, and even jocund. The lawful purpose in foot-ball is not to disable one's opponent, but to play the game under the rules, and to win by fair means or not at all. The lawful purpose in our contemporary struggle for existence is analogous to that. It is to struggle honestly under the rules; to win what we may win by merit, and not by underhand

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

slugging, by secret rebates, lies, breaches of trust, something-for-nothing schemes, dirty work, and unlawful expedients.

A dinner was given the other night to a man of talent who had won extraordinary success in one line of work, and was about to experiment in another. One speaker, paying his compliments to the guest of the company, spoke of the harmlessness of his career. And that was a feature of it worth noting. This man, strong in working capacity and with great natural ability, had progressed steadily to the very top of his vocation. Incidentally, he had earned prodigious sums of money for a man of his profession. Incidentally, he had far outdone all rivals and competitors in his special field. But his success had all been won under the rules. His struggle had been always to better his own work, to compel himself to severer efforts, to develop higher ideals; never to deprive a rival of any chance that a fair field offered.

Favouritism had never helped him; the inside track had had no value to him. He had won on his merits, and his success had been not merely harmless, but helpful and inspiring to the whole competition. That is what success ought to be. To win a purse with a ringer isn't success. It is larceny. And to win a fortune, great or small, by unlawful, unfair, and under-hand means is something of very much the same sort.

No reasonable amount of struggle, under the rules, is going to hurt our generation of Americans. It will do them good. As for hurry and living in cities, they should order their lives so that they need not hurry so much, and they should make their cities better to live in, and live away from them more. Both of these last desirable things are in process of rapid accomplishment. Parks large and small, building laws, tenement-house commissions, and the like are making our great

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

cities much better to live in, and an extraordinary development of means of transportation is making it easier and cheaper to get out of them. Hurry all day long is exhausting, but to go briskly about one's business and home again after it may be merely a phase of stimulating exercise.

And are noise and canned food to be our life's reward? Throw in newspapers, too, they are as much maligned as anything. The newspapers, many of them, are about the best and most stimulating reading obtainable, albeit they should not be the only things read. The canned food adds a variety to our national diet that was lacking when Samuel J. Tilden tried to go to Yale College and had to leave because he could get nothing to eat that his impaired digestion was equal to. As to the noise, some degree of that is an incident of human society. Some of our towns are much too noisy. I hope and

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

believe that they will improve in that particular. But after all there is an unrivalled attraction about human society and it is considerably wholesome. It takes superior people to thrive on solitude even with quiet thrown in. Feebler folk have been known to degenerate even in the blessed country. It is no more possible in these days to stop the country people from coming to town than to stop the rivers from flowing to the sea. The cities offer the best opportunities to the people who are qualified to improve them. The cities are the great markets for talent and skill as well as for commodities. They would be badly off if the energy that makes them hum were not perpetually reinforced out of the great country reservoirs. And the country would be a worse place if the superfluous vigour that is bred there had not the cities in which to spend itself. To get to some town is the natural and legitimate aspiration of a

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

considerable proportion of the sons and daughters of American farmers. But as the waters that run to the sea are carried back by the process of evaporation, so there must be, as our cities grow greater, a return current out of them countryward for the people for whom town life is no longer profitable, and whose nerves and thews need nature's medication. There is such a current as it is. People who get rich in town promptly provide themselves with country homes, and spend more and more of the year in them as their years increase and their strength declines. But for the people who don't get rich the combination, or the transition, is not so easy. A due proportion of the people who are game to stand more noise, canned food, and struggle in their lives, and who ought to get to town, will get there. That process will take care of itself. The other process—to send back into the country the families, and especially the children, who

## NOISE AND CANNED FOOD

have had more continuous city life than is good for them—needs a good deal of outside assistance, and gets some, though not yet as much as it requires.



## DIVORCE

IN the course of the last twenty years in Massachusetts the annual number of divorces has doubled relatively to the annual number of marriages. Twenty years ago about one Massachusetts marriage in thirty ended in a divorce. In 1902 the ratio of divorces to marriages was one to 17.4; in 1903, one to 15.6; in 1904, one to 15.3. I do not know that Massachusetts vaunts herself openly on being the most civilized State in the Union, but if she should, she could make out a pretty strong case in support of her vaunt. At any rate, she has her due proportion of good people, and has good divorce laws, and to accept her as a representative State, and her divorce experience as a representative experience, implies no disparagement to any other

## DIVORCE

State. The popularity of divorce is increasing in the United States, and presumably the ratio of increase in Massachusetts indicates closely enough what the average ratio of increase is, or is going to be, in the rest of the country.

What is to be inferred from these Massachusetts figures ? Is it that marriage is losing its hold upon the Americans ? Will one marriage in seven end in divorce in 1934, and one marriage in three in 1960 ? The figures do not warrant such deductions. It is fair to infer, not that more marriages fail than used to fail, but merely that a larger proportion of the failures go for treatment to the divorce courts. And whether that is an evil, and if so how much of an evil, is an interesting subject for speculation.

There are two standards about marriage and divorce, the Christian and the secular. The Christian standard, based on Christ's words as twice recorded in

## DIVORCE

the New Testament, makes adultery the only legitimate basis for divorce, and denies remarriage to the guilty party. That standard accords perfectly with the Christian theory of marriage, by which twain become one flesh, and the joined of God are to be inseparable by man. That theory of marriage has not been beaten and is not likely to be. But Christ, when He expounded it, made mention of another theory and practice of marriage and divorce in use in the society in which He lived. "Moses for the hardness of your hearts," He said, "suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it hath not been so." And when the disciples demurred at the strictness of His rule and questioned the expediency of getting married at all if marriage was to be so confining, He seemed to admit that their deprecation was not altogether unnatural, and explained, "All men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it

## DIVORCE

is given. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”

So that is where we are left. Nearly all of us who are capable of taking thought accept the Christian ideal of marriage as the true one, and if we get married at all it is with a sincere and definite purpose of continuing so bound for better or worse “until death us do part.” All the divorce laws in Christian countries are based on the Christian ideal of marriage and recognize its general intention. It is not possible to make a contract of marriage for a stipulated term, or during good behaviour. The contract is for life. But because our notions of justice make us feel that a contract which one party deliberately abuses ought not to hold the other party to it, the laws empower the courts to grant divorces for causes that to the lawgivers of various States seem reasonable and sufficient. Everybody knows how great a disparity there is in the

## DIVORCE

views of our State lawgivers as to what constitutes due ground for divorce. Some States in their statutes maintain the Christian position and make adultery the only ground, forbidding the guilty party to marry again. Others grant release for cruelty, drunkenness, non-support, incompatibility of disposition, and other reasons, and leave both the guilty and the innocent parties to use their own discretion about remarrying. The result of this diversity of secular laws is that married Americans who are tired of their bargain and have time enough and money enough to devote to getting quit of it can usually do so without much trouble, provided their spouses do not object. But it is still very hard for an American man to get rid of a wife who has not seriously misbehaved unless she is willing to be rid of him.

The variety in divorce laws that has come in this country from the liberty the States have used in statute-making is usu-

## DIVORCE

ally set down as a great evil. I suppose it is. Certainly, it has many evil results. A perfect divorce law for all the country would be better. But would an imperfect law for all the States be any better, and is there any reasonable possibility of any State or aggregation of States getting a law that is better than imperfect? Any conceivable divorce law will make some hard cases, and the lack of a divorce law will make still worse ones. Some persons will suffer in any case. I am not so sure as some, perhaps better informed, persons are that one imperfect divorce law for the whole country would be so very much better than some variety in imperfections. There are advantages about flexibility. A marriage is usually past ready cure when the partners to it begin to read the statutes and compare Rhode Island with South Dakota.

Who has vested interests in a marriage that are entitled to be respected when

## DIVORCE

there comes the question of a divorce? First of all the children of that marriage, if there are any; then the two parties to the marriage contract; then society, including the relatives and friends of the spouses, the church whose representative married them, and the public at large, which has an interest in maintaining the permanency of marriage. The children have the best right to have their interests consulted, for they are innocent and involuntary participants in the profits and the losses of the marriage. The preference of either or both parents for divorce may justly be set aside if it is contrary to the interests of the children. A young girl, her reason upset by vain efforts to reconcile her parents who were getting a divorce, shot her father the other day and was herself barely saved by him from suicide. And the next day the papers told of a sixteen-year-old boy at boarding-school who, hearing that his parents had been

## DIVORCE

divorced in spite of his efforts to prevent it, turned on the gas in his bedroom and died. That girl and that boy had been swindled by their parents. Had the parents a moral, and should they have had a legal, right to a divorce as against the wishes and interests of those children? The interest of children in a marriage is the vital interest. All other are sentimental as compared with it. Should there not be an age of consent at which children shall be allowed to permit the divorce of their parents? Prior to that age their interests might be protected by the courts, and failing their permission when they are old enough the divorce might wait until they are at least twenty-one. Legal separation might as well be allowed even to parents where circumstances warrant it and under reasonable conditions, for that is not incurable and does not leave either parent free to marry again, but the first question as to the granting of a complete



## DIVORCE

divorce should be how it will affect the children of the marriage. When a divorce is warranted and promises to benefit them, grant it. When it seems likely to be prejudicial to their interests, withhold it until it may come without harm to them.

When there are no children, the divorce question is simplified, but how far it still is from being simple and how far American public opinion still is from an agreement about it is illustrated by the great variety, above noticed, of the divorce laws in the different States. The many States are as yet of many minds as to what are proper grounds for divorce, and their several statutes will never be harmonized until there is such a crystallization of general sentiment as has not yet shown any sign of coming. We can agree that when one party has fulfilled the marriage contract and the other has broken it, it is for the faithful and innocent party to say

## DIVORCE

whether or not the contract shall be annulled. We can agree that all the rights and privileges of the innocent party ought to be protected. But how about the case where the marriage is childless and hopelessly distasteful to both parties, and they both want to be quit of their bonds and can agree about the details of release? Is it necessary as a matter of morals and public policy to hold them to their contract and make them live it out? Having made a mess of one experiment must they be estopped from ever making another? It is chiefly on that issue that opinion divides.

In considering divorce it makes a difference whether you start with the idea of Christian marriage and consider all defections from it as so many evidences of demoralization, or whether you begin with a view of a large and varied assortment of male and female human creatures with the propensity to pair off, and ob-

## DIVORCE

serve their matings. From the first point of view the large number of American divorces will seem to betoken a lamentable lack of constancy and rectitude of purpose. From the second point of view the very large proportion of marriages that hold good will seem a splendid testimony to the continuity of human preferences and the influence of Christian civilization. No less lofty a conception of marriage than Christ's would serve for an ideal. The realization of that ideal is its own munificent reward; the failure to realize it is its own punishment. To Christ such failure seems to have appeared a sufficient punishment, if we may judge from His compassionate attitude toward the woman taken in adultery. Nobody ever developed the graces of Christian character by compulsion of law, and laws cannot be expected to keep all marriages up to the Christian standards. All Christian influence, direct and indirect, may prop-

## DIVORCE

erly be exerted to make marriages permanent, but secular laws may hardly attempt with safety to constrain folks to the realization of Christian ideals. I cannot see that if our divorce laws were stricter it would necessarily improve the status of marriage. What sort of people are getting divorces as it is? A small proportion of the applicants are people of character and probity who have made unfortunate marriages from which by any standard of estimation they are entitled to be released. Another group is composed of people of advantageous social standing, but of undisciplined natures and light character, whose manner of life and pursuit of pleasure demoralize their standards of behaviour. When married people of this sort get tired of one another they want divorce that will qualify them to marry some one else and will so far protect their reputations that they may still be received in the society that is most to their taste.

## DIVORCE

This sort of convenient divorce the churches justly disapprove, and the more reputable members of polite society regard with a sort of toleration which is pitiful, disgusted, or scornful, according to the charitableness of the observer. If light-minded people could go to court and get divorces at will and remarry without prejudice to their standing in society, it would argue a serious corruption in morals. But that cannot be done. The contrary is so decidedly true that even the divorced people whose characters and behaviour entitle them to respect, and whose misfortunes entitle them to sympathy, suffer much from the prejudice with which all divorce is regarded.

But the great bulk of the divorces are obtained by people of no particular standing and no advantageous bringing up, who find that they are badly married and want to try again. This class includes a vast number of women who are deserted by

## DIVORCE

their husbands and, being left without means of support, are the more disposed, if opportunity offers, to marry again for the sake of a decent maintenance. It is hard to believe that the interests of society are gravely menaced by statutes which enable a decent woman without means of support to cut loose from a husband who has deserted her, and take up, if she can, with one who is worth sticking to. We may say that having made one failure of marriage she had better let that institution alone, but certainly we need not add to her troubles by harsh consideration of her efforts to reshape her life.

We shall never all be satisfied with any conclusion about divorce. Divorce is failure, and failure is never pleasing. Our ideal of marriage is right as it stands, and marriage that conforms with it is so immeasurably better than any sort of divorce that it would seem safe to trust it to maintain itself irrespective of restric-

## DIVORCE

tion or compulsory legislation. Society will not become corrupt because divorce is too easy, though divorce may become too common because of the corruption of public morals. Divorce is a symptom, far more than a cause, of corruption.

## THE PROSPECTS OF "SOCIETY" IN AMERICA

AN article contributed some months ago to *Harper's Weekly* by Mr. David Gray was embellished with a number of interesting thoughts and seems adapted to inspire some further reflections which may be worth consideration. Mr. Gray discoursed upon "Some Phases of American Social Life," remarking upon the development of polite society in the various parts of our extensive country, and especially contrasting certain existing conditions in the great seaboard cities with those that prevail in the newer inland cities which are making such rapid and important progress in wealth and population. In the eastern seaboard cities—Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore



and Washington—he noticed a certain amount of inter-relationship, “a certain social organism” he called it, meaning, I take it, that the folks who concerned themselves with polite activities in any one of these cities had acquaintance and social relations with people of like interests and standing in most of the others. But he was impressed with the social isolation of the inland cities, in each of which exists a pretty definite group of what, with apologies, I will call “society people” who live in intimate and edifying relations with one another, but seem, as a group, to be sufficient for themselves, and to have only a very slight connection, if any, with corresponding groups in other towns. He speculated about this state of things, whether it would continue or whether, eventually, society in America would achieve in some measure a national organization, centring, perhaps, in Washington, as British society centres in Lon-

## THE PROSPECTS OF

don. Incidentally, he considered the kinds of gentlemen and ladies who were growing up in various parts of the country, and without discovering any vital difference between those exhibited by the old seaboard cities and those who practise politeness in the inland towns, he betrayed a rather strong impression that the conditions of life in the inland towns was more favourable to the development of graces of mind, character, and deportment, that the profuse expenditures of the older cities in social pleasures had its drawbacks and embarrassments, and that in the rapidly growing communities removed from the Atlantic seaboard, the best ideals of American breeding and manners in large measure are being fostered.

I hope they are. I hope that Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburg and St. Louis, and half a hundred lesser but very potent and

## “SOCIETY” IN AMERICA

ambitious towns, are turning out very high-class gentlefolks indeed. If their product surpasses the fine fruit of Boston's culture, and the carefully regulated and restricted output of Philadelphia, and the fine flavour that generations of canvas-back ducks and terrapin have left in Baltimore, then is our broad land indeed a land of social promise. There is no doubt at all that there is plenty of good company in these States and that it is pretty well distributed. The inland cities are comparatively new, but not in the sense that they have lately emerged from barbarism. The people in them are not new. Those of American stock are just as old as the people of the Eastern cities from which their forebears came. Some of them have not been rich so long as some of the people in the Eastern cities, but some of the seaboard folks who are most active and most useful in society have not been rich so very long either.

## THE PROSPECTS OF

But good company does not exactly constitute "society," though a society that is not constituted of people who are good company is of no use. To make society you have to take the right quality of companionable folk and let them play together for a good while, and adjust themselves to one another, and form habits, and acquire congenial prejudices and lay down rules. All that is what is meant by organization. A "society" is not organized by the election of a Board of Directors. It has no elections and no directors, but it has caucuses and consensuses of opinion and bosses, and to be perfectly organized it needs a supreme boss. All the world loves a boss even more than it loves a lover. There is more to do about a boss than about a lover. When you have done your lover the best turn you can and wished him good luck, that is almost the end of it. But a boss is no end of fun, especially a society boss.

## “SOCIETY” IN AMERICA

To placate her, to win her approval, to get from her what she has to bestow, to machinate against her rule, to run in interlopers under her circus tent, to defy her at a pinch, all these are excellent diversions for persons who are so lucky as to be included in a society which is organized to the boss point, and who take pains to enjoy it and improve its opportunities.

In England where society is organized on a national basis, the King is boss, and his authority is recognized. That helps to make it interesting. You see the chief office of a society boss is to be an obstacle to happiness, for happiness can never be complete or satisfying or lasting if it has not due obstacles. But a society boss must be a purveyor of happiness too—a good provider for those who are favoured, and able to shine with rays that are appreciated when they come, and regretted when they are shut off.

Who would be boss of a national

## THE PROSPECTS OF

American society centring in Washington is a question that nearly concerns the possibility of the existence of such a society. Not the President, I think. The President comes and goes. He has not enough continuity of official position for the work, and he has too many other things to attend to. Presidents vary too, in taste, inclination and capacity. President Roosevelt has a taste for society. Quadruple his salary and give him a life lease of the White House, and I dare say Washington would advance rapidly and noticeably toward becoming America's social centre. But so long as the attributes of the President are what they are, Washington can count on only a limited amount of help from the White House in realizing its social possibilities.

I remember some years ago walking out Connecticut Avenue by moonlight after a long absence from the capital, and coming to a huge and imposing white

## “SOCIETY” IN AMERICA

house that was like nothing that I remembered in the Washington I used to know. I stood and stared at it, saying to myself, “This means something new. The country—the great West, I suppose—has begun to come here to live.” So it had. That house and the people who lived in it took a hand that was felt in shaping Washington society. But what came of it? The daughters of the house have all married Englishmen—one an Englishman of great distinction—and I suppose that in the end they will all be bright stars shining in the firmament of London. They will perhaps promote the solidarity of the great society of the world by strengthening America’s representation in London, but they will not be of much use in helping to make Washington an American social centre.

What should the ladies of that house have done if they had cared to devote themselves to perfecting the organization

## THE PROSPECTS OF

of American society? Married rich men from Chicago, Boston, and New York and taken them to Washington in the winter, to live in great houses and help make our national capital brilliant and distinguished. But that is what they did not do, and what American girls with large fortunes and aspirations are not doing. They either marry in the town they live in, or marry and go to New York, or marry foreigners and live abroad. Those of whom we hear the most do the last.

In considering the future of American society, it is natural to inquire into the tendencies of people who are so far absolved from questions of ways and means that they can do what they like and live where they will. People who still have to work for their living will stay where their work is, or go where work invites, and society for them will be no more than an employment of spare hours. Let us see then what our very rich people



## “SOCIETY” IN AMERICA

seem to be doing and whither they are moving.

The rich people of the seaboard cities, as a rule, stay where they are. Boston and Philadelphia hold their own. Baltimore does so not quite so successfully, but sufficiently. Washington attracts some people of large fortune and a good many who have modest independent incomes. New York keeps most of its own rich people and gathers in throngs of others from all parts of the country. But that is not because of its social attractions, but because it is the commercial center of the country, and every man whose accumulation of dollars is big enough to be interesting has business there, finds entertainment there and feels at home there. New York, far more than Washington, is the national social centre of the very rich.

Now as to the class, still small, but doubtless growing, of the rich who do not work. What happens to such per-

## THE PROSPECTS OF

sons in the inland cities where they already abound considerably, and what will happen to their descendants? They live and enjoy life in societies, which, as Mr. Gray says, are intimate, agreeable and very restricted. When in the course of time they get tired of seeing the same people at dinner and observing the operation of the same minds, they pull out and go to Europe. When they get tired of Europe they come home. Every year they go two and three times to New York to buy various commodities and see some plays. In the summer many of them come to the seashore where they live agreeably and make new acquaintances. All the way from Newport to Bar Harbor, you see their villas, owned or hired, dotting the coast. If society really interests them as a pursuit, very likely they go to Newport, but comparatively few of them are interested in society as a pursuit. They want no more than a pleasant

life, with an anchor somewhere, and reasonable entertainment. Their boys and girls go away to the big schools and colleges, and get to know boys and girls from the seaboard cities and all the rest of the country. When it comes to marrying off their children, our inland friends are apt to regret the isolation of their home society, and to wish that they could offer their children a greater choice of possible partners than the local field affords. Then, no doubt, they feel the want of a town that can do for them what London does for England. Do they take a house in Washington and bring their children out there? Why should they? There are few men in Washington for likely girls to marry, and very little work there for likely youths to do. They are more likely to take a house or an apartment in New York, where, though the organized society seems to be somewhat restricted, “everybody that is

## THE PROSPECTS OF

anybody” has friends, and most people have relatives.

And yet comparatively few people from the inland cities go to New York for social purposes alone. The season in New York is short, and society, I take it—I speak from hearsay—is still much less interesting than in London. We all have noticed cases of Americans, who having the inclination, the money, and the energy to make society their chief business, and having realized all the social hopes that New York had to offer, have finally packed up and moved to London where there was more to attain. New York is a very handy town to own a house, or maintain an apartment, in. Any one who has such a house with some clothes hanging in the closet, and something for breakfast in the cupboard, will be pretty sure to use it a good many days every year, no matter what houses he has elsewhere. And having such a house he

## “SOCIETY” IN AMERICA

will have valuable opportunities of human converse with available folks from all parts of the United States that have as yet been explored, including profitable ones who live in New York itself. But as to whether Destiny is figuring on making New York or any other city the centre of organized society in the United States I know not, and do not find the means to make an intelligent guess. Perhaps Mr. Henry James, whose experienced eyes are gathering new impressions of his native land, may speculate about it in a fashion that will add to knowledge. Without hope or pretence of adding to knowledge, I guess that our country is too big, and its distances too magnificent and its people too busy, ever to develop a single definite social capital. It seems to me more likely to continue to have many social centres, each important and useful in its own territory, their isolation to be ameliorated by the travel habit, the constant

## “SOCIETY” IN AMERICA

migrations of solvent people in summer to the sea, in winter to the South, at odd times to New York and Washington, and periodically to Europe. One great function of a social capital is to bring people together. In this country that end is likely to be well served by other means.

1905.

## SUMMER

I READ it last week in the paper that, whereas a generation or two ago solvent Americans used to have "country places," now they have "farms." In the change of nomenclature the writer found an indication of a society that in the midst of wealth is seeking simplicity.

Yes, we are getting back to nature. Nature is a good thing, and more generally appreciated than it was, and there are many Americans nowadays who can afford to cultivate it. And the favourite contemporary way of getting back to it is by automobile. You must not laugh. It is true. Witness Rudyard Kipling, who has got back to more deeply rural British nature since motor cars came than his pet torpedo-boats would have shown him in a thousand years.

## SUMMER

And the favourite time for getting back to nature is summer. There is a delusion prevalent among city people that summer is the season of leisure. The very strength and wide diffusion of that idea bears interesting evidence of the big place the cities and their denizens have made for themselves in our day. To be sure, the yachts go into commission in summer; it is vacation time in the schools (except in the summer schools), and for some of the lawyers, judges, doctors, and preachers. A vast number of American women and children and some men go to Europe, and in the course of the season more of the men follow them. The people in the cities whose vocations do not compel them to stay there, and who can afford to get out, do get out for longer or shorter intervals and hie them to the seashore, the mountains, the lakes, or the plain country. Organized efforts are made to get as many as possible of the



## SUMMER

city children out of town, and many (but not enough) fresh-air funds are gathered to that beneficent end. Beyond doubt, there is a decided suggestion of spare time and mental enlargement about summer, but, after all, it is in the summer half of the year that most of the work is done. All the crops are raised in summer; most of the building is done; most of the factories run; the railroads are busy; all the villages that take in summer boarders work overtime in August. Things hum all summer long. Even the cities which the society pages of the newspapers speak of as "deserted" retain four-fifths of their people, and keep most of them very busy indeed. A very large majority of the wage-earners of the world work hard all summer long. But there is to be said, that at least one-third of all the living people are below the wage-earning age, and another third are supplementary or indirect wage-earners, not

## SUMMER

immediate ones, and are not tied to office hours or factory hours. And, besides, the summer days are long, and the habit of shutting down on Saturday afternoon, which is getting so strong a hold on the cities, has some hold on the villages too. Anyhow, for one reason or another, good or bad, the ideal of summer is that it is the do-nothing season, when wise people rest all they can, and no one works any harder than he must.

I take it that our deepest impressions are those formed in youth, and that this one of summer as leisure time is one of them. It makes a great deal of difference in our world whether school keeps or not. By all odds, our biggest and most important American leisure class is made up of persons in the educational stage of life who are temporarily released from the institutions they attend. The first claim on summer belongs to lovers. The next to college persons and school-

## SUMMER

girls and school-boys, most of whom will be lovers presently, and who find summer a convenient time in which to get acquainted. The rest of summer belongs to the grown-ups, who are entitled to collect such dues as they are able, but the chief summer use of the grown-ups seems to be in making the season profitable to the young. To make existence profitable for the young is about all there is in life for grown-ups anyway. It seems to be the chief thing they are here for. That may sound like servitude, and in some cases, no doubt, it is galling, but nothing ails servitude as a manner of spending one's life provided it is the right kind. This servitude to the rising generation suits most of the adults. I notice that those of them who work hardest and most successfully at it seem to be having the most fun, and that those who lack young people to plan for and slave for take such pleasures as they can find

## SUMMER

somewhat heavily. In this matter of getting back to nature in the summer, observe that the young are much better at it than the adults who have been trained long and painfully to "usefulness." Mr. Maxfield Parrish has made a picture called summer; a picture full of shimmering atmosphere. Its central figure is the true summer hero. Atmosphere is all he has on and he has pan-pipes in his hand. This summer hero who has got back to nature with so much certainty, is young, you will notice, and not a bit useful. He never did a chore, never will; never folded up his clothes, never opened a book, never was end rush nor caught behind the bat. No business man would employ him. He is the ideal summer person. Any grown-up who is going to compete with him must do it by proxy.

There is where the rising generation comes in. A contemporary boy in his

## SUMMER

school vacation has to wear some clothes, and in other details shows the effects of civilization. He can never attain to quite the degree of rational emancipation of Mr. Parrish's boy, but he can come near enough to it to surprise you—yes, and gratify you very much. He can be so useless so long, not only without crabbedness or complaint, but with continuous good humour and enjoyment. His clothes are very slight hindrance to complete joy, for when it is hot he wears very few. Trowsers—apt to be duck; a shirt with the sleeves rolled up, open in the neck and the collar-band turned in; shoes, abbreviated stockings, and something to hold them up, and nothing else worth mentioning—except, oh, yes, at times, a hat-band.

I had almost forgotten the coloured hat-bands, and they are one of the contemporary summer time's most significant adornments. Thirty years ago, I

## SUMMER

remember, the college oarsmen and baseball players used to wear them. Very gradually it penetrated the busy mind of man that a wider use of them was desirable, and now they brilliantly supplement and differentiate the mission of the straw hat. The straw hat only proclaims the season. The hat-band goes into human details. It says, according to its uses and their arrangement, "I am of St. Nicodemus's School," "I am of such a group in Newbridge College," "I am of the Ex-teenth Regiment," and so on, and so on, until the observer who is wise in hat-bands, as he walks abroad in a great town or wherever the summer youth congregate, is constantly receiving visual information about his younger fellows whom he meets. There is a large assortment of hat-bands that mean something in particular, and a vast number besides that don't, but they all have a joyous influence, and they all greet the summer when it

## SUMMER

comes and mark its progress by their fading.

I like the hat-bands. If they tell a little story and help one to identify his fellows, so much the better. We don't know enough about one another, and miss many pleasant exchanges by mere lack of timely information. If all people were tagged with cards of brief description it would be a high convenience to many others besides the police.

Hat-bands and coloured shirts are a sign of an awakened propensity in males to share in that adornment of the summer which has so long been prosecuted with recognized success by women. No single feature of summer is appreciated with so much enthusiasm as the girls' clothes. It is understood that good winter clothes involve rather serious expenditure, but the number of girls and women who manage to look charming in summer dresses is so much greater than could be the number

## SUMMER

who are rich, that the conclusion is forced that summer raiment may be inexpensive and still pretty.

As I was saying, the only way that trained and civilized grown-up people may hope to get back to nature, and that perfect effortless receptiveness that is ideally suitable to the summer season, is by using the still imperfectly perverted young as their proxies. And the young lend themselves very liberally to that use, and coöperate in their elders' efforts, letting the elders work, and demonstrating by enjoyment that their labour is not in vain.

One thing that summer-worshipping elders who have the necessary apparatus do is to get up house-parties for their young. Nothing brings the summer season home to elders with greater penetration and makes them feel nearer to nature than house-parties. To make one is simple. You take some houses (furnished),



## SUMMER

a little land, some water if procurable, food, drink, a few horses, motor-cars, and sailboats, according to taste or income, add from six to a dozen young persons of assorted genders, stir with a thermometer, and go and sit in a cool place. The house-party does all the rest; plays tennis or golf, drives, motes, goes swimming, has picnics, sleeps, is regular at meals and animated in discourse. At least, it should be animated in discourse. If it isn't, you've made a mistake somewhere. But almost always it is, and in return for your work in keeping the machinery running, you have wonderful opportunities for improving and rejuvenating observation. You hear also some of the newest terms of speech and some of the new songs. And you get back to nature in one of its most edifying phases, for have we not the testimony of ancient philosophers that there is nothing in nature more interesting than the way of a man

## SUMMER

with a maid unless it is the way of a maid with a man?

As for the grown people who try to get the flavour of summer, not by proxy, but at first hand, they do various things. A lot of them go to Europe. What they do there I do not know, nor has it ever been satisfactorily expounded to me. It has ceased to be good form for Americans to dwell on the details of their experiences in Europe. When I was there it was fall and not much doing. Yet it was pleasant. I dare say it is pleasant in summer, else folks would not straggle over there in such droves as they do, making American house-parties at all the hotels.

Some grown-up people live on yachts in summer. The sea is a part of nature and undoubtedly worth getting back to, though there is force in Conrad's criticism of yachting as being only an amusement of life, whereas the merchant service, he says, is life itself. The strong

## SUMMER

bond of the sea, the fellowship of the craft, does not exist, he says, between yachtsmen as it does between men who seriously follow the sea for a living.

Still, yachting is delightful when the market has gone your way, and if you can get back to nature in a motor-car you can in a yacht.

Yachts, though, are not for the many. You get a great deal more of nature for your money in a garden. It needn't be a great garden either, but it had better be the same one every summer. You make gardens grow by sticking to them, and poking things into the ground in successive years. Next to a child or a young person a garden is the most helpful summer property, and folks of thrift in ordinary circumstances ought to have both.

Many people see more in gardens that is worth seeing than most people see on yachts. I have known cases where gardens ministered more effectually to some

## SUMMER

people's civilization than Europe did to others. The things about civilization that people can spend a summer in Europe without finding out would fill books.

About a century ago there was a year hereabouts that was known as the year without a summer. In that year snow fell in every month. The people didn't like it.

Summer is popular; deservedly, I think, though reviled at times when it is too hot.

*July, 1905.*

## CONVICTIONS

Is there any new way of having fun? Every once in a while somebody says: "Oh, if there were only a new kind of meat! I am tired of all the meats; I'd like something new to eat!" Then all the rest of us overfed people say, "Yes, that would be pleasant." We would all like to put something in our mouths that not only tasted good, but tasted different. Well, that is only a detail of our chronic longing for new forms of entertainment. Those of us who still try to keep amused vary as much as we can the forms of amusement that we patronize. We change our toys and shift the occupation of our leisure. One year golf makes life seem worth living for us; presently "bridge" is our standard solace. Not very long ago bicycles made all mankind

## CONVICTIONS

happy. More lately automobiles swell the tide of joy for the well-to-do and their servants. Last summer there was some select enthusiasm about motor-boats, and presently it will be something else. All this is mere shifting of toys, and particularly of the newest toys. The old ones—an enormous number of them, ranging from dolls and marbles up to horses, yachts, gardens, and country-places—hold their own with the multitude, and though this or that one is more in request to-day and somewhat less to-morrow, they never, as a class, fall into disuse. But playing with toys, whatever they are, constitutes only one kind of fun, and though you change the toy you don't acquire by such a shift any new general method. In the large sense, to find a new way to have fun amounts to very much more than merely taking up with a new toy.

What put it all into my mind was a talk

## CONVICTIONS

I had with young Pelham who is now putting some finishing touches to his education, and expects in a year or two to begin the practice of a profession in New York. Pelham is a youth of excellent energy. He plays hard and with considerable success and distinction, and I believe he works hard when he works. We played golf together. Golf is not one of the exercises to which he has applied himself, and after we had done nine holes pretty discreditably, we had both had enough, and sat down on a bench to talk. We talked about New York, a town the resources of which Pelham has not yet explored. Being a healthy young fellow he was disposed to consider what sport the place might be constrained to afford. He hopes to be able, under Providence, to experiment with some of the more expensive forms of amusement and we discussed the clubs and the hunting in the neighbourhood, and the various means by which to

## CONVICTIONS

escape the dulness which proverbially results from too close application to work.

I confess that I was somewhat daunted by the exertions that he faced with so much confidence. To play as he hoped to play would be a first-rate occupation for a man not otherwise employed, but to anticipate so much hard pleasuring in time snatched from importunate professional labours seemed to me a Herculean sort of hope. But, of course, that is the way with the young. They have strength to spend for enjoyment, and do not grudge the expenditure.

“You know, Pelham,” said I, “the strong point of New York is that it is a good place to work in, and the great and controlling amusement there is making money. If you can learn to enjoy work you’ll have a happy time, for there is plenty of it, and the wages are good for those who can command them. And there are dinners to eat, and people to



## CONVICTIONS

talk to, and a great variety of profitable girls to pursue, or to avoid, according to one's discretion, but wholesome outdoor sport comes rather hard; though it can be had."

I was ashamed to go on and confess how much it fatigued my imagination to think of the active pleasures he held in such joyous prospect. I let him go without expunging any impression he might have formed that I was in active sympathy with his hearty young hopes of sport. But when I met his mother again I proposed to her that she should retain me as a seasoned and disillusionized philosopher to represent to her son, as opportunity offered, what an exhausting quest the chase after pleasure was, and how doubtful was the adequacy of its remuneration. "In so far," said I, "as I can convince him that work is the best fun and yields the most solid satisfactions, I shall be saving your money, and put-

## CONVICTIONS

ting him ahead in the great work of self-support. And, of course, I should be teaching true doctrine, for work is the main thing, and the most remunerative."

"Yes," she said, "it is true: but why force so much ripe knowledge on him? Let it come to him in due time. It will come plenty soon enough!"

It is told of Samuel Tilden that in consequence of a severe illness when he was an infant, he grew up a very delicate boy, entirely inapt at out-of-door sports, and being practically cut off from the society and pleasures of lads of his own age, he found his fun chiefly indoors, in books and conversation with his elders. It happened that his father was a politician, and Samuel absorbed politics with all his eyes and ears, as well as through his pores. He listened to the discussions of such frequenters of his father's house as Van Buren, Governor Marcy and Senator Silas Wright, and he read Jeffer-

## CONVICTIONS

son's writings until he knew them almost by heart. "It thus happened," says his biographer, "that he practically had no youth; he scarcely ever knew intimately any young people, nor did he ever possess any of that facility in the use of his limbs and muscles which boys usually acquire in their hours of recreation." All that was his misfortune, and he suffered a good many ill consequences from it. Nevertheless, it is evident that there were compensations and that his youth, though unusual, was not unhappy. His relations with his father were very intimate; he liked grown-up talk and liked to think about grown-up subjects. Long before he was twenty he had a pretty complete set of political convictions, and knew what they were and why he had them. And he learned to think pretty nearly to the bottom of a subject which he considered. Now, all that was fun; his kind of fun; the only kind,

## CONVICTIONS

apparently, that was open to him; and he enjoyed it. Constrained by physical disabilities, he got his pleasure out of the only part of him that he found unimpaired—his intellect. But it happened that that was first-rate, and strengthened under cultivation. The result was, that though his bad health bothered him a great deal he got ample satisfactions out of life as he went along, was a companion of leaders in his youth, won extraordinary success in his profession, and returning in later life to active political leadership fought out and won great conflicts for honesty, to the vast benefit of his city and his State.

We need not expect any lad to set himself to have the sort of fun that Tilden had as a boy except under some sort of compulsion. A healthy boy is bound to have, and ought, of course, to have, a different development with a great deal more open-air exercise in it. But if any

## CONVICTIONS

of us is blessed with a reasonably good mind, he must not make the mistake of trying to get too large a proportion of the fun that is reasonably due to him out of his arms and legs and stomach. The bulk of it he must get out of his mind. Pleasure is not very valuable in itself. It isn't the same as happiness except in very early youth. Economically it is of little value except for purposes of repair. Only so much of it is really worth while as constitutes recreation, as restores freshness to the mind, hitches new kites to the imagination and revives the energies. A good deal can be used to advantage in that way, but it is only an accessory to real living. A life in which pleasure is the chief purpose is not only inglorious, but it usually fails to realize its own moderate aim. The quest for amusement when too intense destroys the power, as well as the inclination, to win anything more profitable, and is not fill-

## CONVICTIONS

ing in itself. Most of the fun we have we get in the rebound from effort. We have to work for the appetite which makes our pleasures taste good. To rest is delightful if we are tired, but if we have not acquired a preliminary fatigue, it merely bores us. To talk is delightful if we have anything in our minds worth imparting or discussing, and some one worth discussing it with, but talk is of little account unless it proceeds out of a mind which has been duly trained and replenished. Tilden, debarred from ordinary sport, had fun because he had knowledge, mental power, and convictions. He was apparently very strong in convictions, both moral and political. He wanted to see them prevail, and was willing on occasion to work enormously to make them prevail.

Nobody who is endowed with a good mind and wants to live to his satisfaction can afford to neglect the acquirement of

## CONVICTIONS

convictions. What are they? They ought to be opinions based on knowledge and definitely thought out. Practically they come in various ways—often by inheritance, or as the result of early training; sometimes by association, sometimes from the automatic working of the mind during long periods when it is acquiring and sifting knowledge and experience. Sometimes again convictions seem to come suddenly, especially religious convictions, though there is usually a long process of preparatory thought behind them, and it is really only the final conclusion that is sudden. Deep convictions on any subject don't come ready-made. One has to work for them: to earn them. If they are to hold and to influence conduct, they must be planted deep. But they are worth all the trouble it takes to acquire them because of the increased interest they impart to life. That that is the common opinion about them appears

## CONVICTIONS

from the tenacity with which folks who have them hang on to them. They are absolute valuables, recognized as worth keeping even at a great sacrifice. A man who has convictions is more highly regarded because of them, even by persons whose opinions differ from his. Whatever his convictions may be, and whether they are altogether sound or not, he is felt to be more of a man for having them. When we say of any man that he has no convictions, it is as much as to say that he is second-rate and can hardly amount to very much even though he has good abilities.

Now in the holiday season, when we are all considering how we may benefit one another, and (though with less solicitude, I hope) what good things we are likely to acquire for ourselves, it seems worth suggesting that if we can contribute to enrich anybody's Christmas stocking with a new and valuable conviction, or can get one in



## CONVICTIONS

our own stocking, we shall have improved the Christmas opportunity to better purpose than is common. I shall not put it on the ground that convictions are necessary to salvation, though possibly they are. It may be said with plausibility that the test of any civilization is its ability to secure a due proportion of salvation to the population it affects, and that it is high or low according as that proportion is large or small. But civilization cannot really prosper except as it is based on convictions and sound ones. Nevertheless, I do not here urge the acquirement of convictions for the sake of civilization or of salvation, but merely on the ground that the possession of them vastly increases one's pleasure in life. To be in earnest about some things, to believe in some ideals and give them service and devotion, is far better fun than to drift through life unconvinced, unattached, unconcerned except with self-interest, the rou-

## CONVICTIONS

tine labours of the day and the pleasures of the hour. To learn the truth, and labour to make it prevail is the thing that is really worth while. That is the general employment that is always satisfying, and which makes all particular employments and pleasures profitable and wholesome because they are contributory to it. It is the old story of seeking righteousness first, and having all the other things thrown in. A man may have a thousand defects and be good for something; he may have a thousand abilities and be of no real use. He is no good unless he has character, and he cannot have character unless he has some sound convictions.

Are all these sober reiterations of conceded truths too much like a stick for the Christmas stockings? *Peccavi*; I apologize. Perhaps it is because we have just come out of a political campaign which involved searching of many hearts in the effort to discover what political convic-

## CONVICTIONS

tions they clung to. In the multitude of thoughtful men who have asked themselves where they stood on this or that public question and what they wanted, many have been puzzled to reply and have hesitated to decide with which great party they should act. They have doubtless realized that the men who will determine our country's course are men who do know what they want; who have convictions and the courage of them. And on the soundness of the convictions of such men the country's immediate course depends.

And as for that likely young Pelham, so eager in exercises, facing life with such a lively ardour for wholesome sport, with what particular conviction shall I hope his Christmas stocking may bulge? Not any precocious conclusion that all things are vanity or that all flesh is grass. No! No! Leave him his ardour and his exercises too. They will both do him good if

## CONVICTIONS

they keep within bounds. Shall we have him convinced that protection is robbery; that trade should be free; that the trusts ought, or ought not, to go? Oh, no; none of those particulars. I only ask for him this time a general conviction of his responsibility as a human creature and a budding citizen; a realization that it is his business not only to get on in the world, but to contrive, in so far as lies in him, that the world may continue to be fit to live in, and to afford all honest adventurers fit chances and a fair course. I would have him gain the general conviction that we are all members one of another, and bound to make our individual development and prosperity harmonious with the general good. That is a very moderate conviction, a perfectly sound one, and one highly proper to the Christmas season. Folks may have it, and yet differ as to details, and seem to work at cross purposes. Yet if they work with

## CONVICTIONS

the sort of purpose that that conviction breeds, good is bound to come of it, for it is out of the conflict of opposing forces that most of the best things do come. The hope of the world lies not in the expectation that all the decent people will ever agree about anything, but rather in their working, each at his own job, according to his own lights, but with all his work tempered and directed by his interest in the common purpose.

And it is better fun that way. Life goes better if you look upon it as a serious business, relieved by sport, than if you look upon it as an opportunity for sport marred by other engagements.

*January, 1905.*

## SPECULATION

It tells in a Sunday paper, of the date of this writing, how somebody made a million dollars in a day. The somebody himself tells the story. It was done in Wall Street when Union Pacific lately lifted itself by the boot straps. It was not really done in a day, but was the culmination of weeks of anxious head work. The culmination came impetuously, and proved to be unexpectedly tall and ample. The somebody did, apparently, see himself a million dollars or so richer at the end of a day than he was at the beginning, and very much richer at the end of the day following, and so on for several days thereafter. He did get his million, and much more apparently, at a swoop, and naturally he was happy over it. To give

## SPECULATION

some immediate relief to his feelings, he sent out and bought a vast white summer palace that the late president of a life insurance company, flushed with salaries and gains that were subsequently condemned, had built for himself on the Jersey shore. So shift the glories of this world, especially the stuccoed glories of the Jersey shore.

Mr. Somebody is a decent man, for aught that appears to the contrary, and the millions that his Pacific plunges brought him seemed to be honest money, as money goes. But since to read of sudden and prodigious stock-market successes tends to disturb the equanimity of all of us drudges, we are entitled to console ourselves by any reflections that we can entertain in deprecation of these large accessions of unearned wealth, and in disparagement of their value to those who grab them. How good is this money which Mr. Somebody scooped up two

## SPECULATION

months ago and which, very possibly, he has been able to retain as long as this? It will certainly buy things. Did it not buy the stuccoed palace? It is just as good as any money to buy things with. Jewelers will take it, and yacht builders and sellers of automobiles, and grocerymen and marketmen, too, and churches and colleges. Ordinarily, there is no special taint on the Wall Street money that is won by outsiders who succeed in buying stocks that rise, or in selling stocks that drop. Most of us, if we attempt such speculations at all, accept the profits of them, when there are any profits, with a cheerful spirit, however in the back part of our minds we may deprecate the processes from which our profits spring.

And what is the matter with the processes, and why, if we have preserved any ethical instincts, do we distrust them, even to the point, in some cases, of holding that the next worse thing to losing a large sum



## SPECULATION

of money in Wall Street is to win a large sum there? If we had sufficient money in hand, and knew positively that by buying in the open market certain quantities of certain stocks we could win a large sum, would we refuse to do it? Not many of us would, unless our positive knowledge came in such a way as to leave us without moral right to act upon it. The prejudice against getting something for nothing is not strong enough in many minds to compass such a renunciation. But in actual practice fiscal opportunity does not present itself as a certainty to be accepted or refused as one may choose. It offers as a risk, and as a rule it offers only to persons who are looking for chances. There are a great many people who never look for such chances. Their objection to them is, first, that they are too risky; and, second, that the pursuit of them is not conducive to the development of the qualities of mind and of char-

## SPECULATION

acter which they value. Speculation is a mental and moral poison, just as alcohol and, to a less degree, tobacco are physical poisons. That is not a conclusive reason for letting it entirely alone, for very many of the poisons are useful to take. But it is a first-rate reason for using the utmost caution in dealing with it. There is a speculative element in almost every kind of business. Farming is partly speculative; so is manufacturing and banking and shopkeeping. Work that has not a gamble in it, is, by so much, the worse for the lack. We like a gamble better than a certainty, provided the hazard is not too great. The fisherman who makes a small haul one day and a big one another day, gets better entertainment out of his work than if he got precisely an average weight of fish whenever he went out. But there is a wide difference between work that has a speculative element in it, and that species of speculation

## SPECULATION

which is the expression of a desire to step in and reap where another has sown. This last is not an elevating occupation. It is not illegal, but at least it is parasitic. And it is very greedy! Is it not true that a mind that is once committed to the aspiration to get something for nothing is debased, and is the more debased the more it succeeds in getting what it is after?

A clever and successful professional speculator lately argued that speculation in stocks, grain, and other products that men bet on, was in itself a work of vast usefulness because it was a necessary part of the process of establishing prices. Every person, he declared, who bet five dollars in a bucket shop contributed his mite of effort to this vastly important work. He made a good argument, and undoubtedly there was a basis of truth to it. There are other fields of usefulness, however, in which the bucket shop's

## SPECULATION

patron and the other speculators can spend their money much more usefully, and after all, though speculators do help to make prices, they are very apt to make them wrong, thereby necessitating further outlay of labour and expense to make them over again. Nobody was ever known to console himself for money lost in speculation, by the thought that he had contributed usefully to the making of a price, though that plea may have its value to a winner, in extenuating his gains.

They need extenuation, don't they? Somehow Mr. Somebody's millions won overnight by the advance of stocks bought on margins, are not quite as good money as they might be, in spite of their purchasing powers. Hard as it is to generalize about speculation—to say this sort is fair and that is not, this sort is respectable and that isn't, this sort is useful and that pernicious—we do in our minds make distinctions, and most of us are

## SPECULATION

clearly conscious of having vastly more respect for money that has in some sense been earned, than for money that has merely been gambled for. We are apt to feel, too, that the debasement of spirit, which we suspect of being an incident of gambling gains, is proportionate to the size of the winnings, and that a man who scoops up a million or two at a time has taken more poison into his moral system than another whose successes have been moderate or trifling. These sentiments, being felt in the bones rather than in the mind, and being highly disputable, must be verified, if they are verified at all, by observation of contemporary mankind. What does this easy-come money do? Does it strengthen character or weaken it? Does it establish families or destroy them? Does it make for righteousness or for rottenness? I have no answer to give to these questions. I merely wonder about them. There is bone and sinew in the

## SPECULATION

country now. Where did it come from? There will be bone and sinew in the country fifty years from now. How much of it will be the product of this easy-come money? There are 1,100 brokers on the New York Stock Exchange. The number includes many strong, upright, and remarkable men. Their trade is considered to be about the best paid trade in sight. I do not know of any trade in which the same amount of ability, integrity, and work gains as much money as in the stock broker's trade. Is it a good trade? It has its good points and undoubtedly it has its good men. Moreover, it is a trade that is indispensable to the business of the country. But as commonly conducted it must be pretty trying to the sensibilities. To be a doctor and see folks' physical sores has its drawbacks, but to be a broker, and have the cupidity of one's fellows under constant inspection, must be a good deal worse.

## SPECULATION

Moreover, the doctors have the happiness to relieve suffering and help to cure disease, but the brokers don't make many cures. Like the doctors they live by disease, but their office is rather to promote than abate it. Certainly the broker's trade deserves to be profitable, it must be so unpleasant.

It really is more blessed to give than to receive, and analogously it is more blessed to give a fair equivalent for what you take. That accords better with the impulses of a sound heart than to take and give nothing. To get the best of a bargain is only less disgusting than to get the worst of it, and much of the time it is more disgusting. The man through whose fingers the ticker tape is running, has his whole attention concentrated on this sordid effort to get the better of a bargain. He is not even striving, as he may properly do, to get a just price for his own, for as a rule he owns not much more of what he buys or

## SPECULATION

sells than the privilege of buying or selling it. The game at its best is dog eat dog, and at its ordinary worst it is dog eat rabbit. To play it as a game is more tolerable than to make serious work of it, but it is a game that is apt to run away with its players, and absorb more thought, if not more money, than they can spare.

That is the worst of stock speculation—its devastating and unsettling effect upon the mind. It is the enemy of tranquillity, of concentration, of all lofty thought. It is engrossing, and incurably sordid. It is stimulating in an unhealthy way that induces restlessness and calls for exciting pleasures as the alternative to anxious thoughts. It destroys thrift, and the rapidity of its gains, when there are gains, makes the slower profits of work seem derisory. And it undermines and coarsens character. The very foundation of character is honesty, and the



## SPECULATION

pith of honesty is to give good value for what you get. But nearly all stock speculation is an effort to gain, without due labour or return, values that some one else has produced.

It may be that as much as that can be said of most of the processes by which folks get rich. If that is true, so much the worse for the other processes. Many of them are disenchanting enough. There is usually a considerable proportion of flint in the make-up of fortune-builders, and comparatively few of them get rich as the result of treatment taken for enlargement of the heart. Nevertheless great wealth that comes as the result of great services rendered has a different quality from the easy-come money that results from having the wit or the luck to hold out one's apron when the plum tree is shaken. Money ought to be, but is not, a measure of service. We ought to be, but are not, ashamed to take more

## SPECULATION

than we are worth. But at least it helps our self-respect to go through some reasonable motions of making a return for what we get.

*November, 1906.*

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

THE saying that "every man has his price" was always a mean, underbred remark. There are honest men: a great many of them. I hope a larger proportion of the visible supply of men are honest than used to be. I hope so, but I am not sure. I wish the honest men would advertise more, for the men whose honesty is questioned are advertised nowadays in such numbers and so profusely, that it makes one uneasy for fear that the American standards of morality are crumbling. The special peculiarity of our times is not that men succeed by dint of methods which the average man regards as dishonest, but that such men are respected and trusted, their methods and their success admired, while people who

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

blink at what is known of their records are looked upon as "fussy." The consciousness of the existence of this state of things finds constant expression. Frederick Trevor Hill says in a recent magazine article: "A high sense of honour is no longer required by our social code, and we are daily making fewer and less insistent demands upon ourselves and others in this regard."

The president of a manufacturing corporation discussing in another magazine whether private or public business is more corrupt, declares that though the small, coarse frauds which used to be practised by small tradesmen have pretty much disappeared, "the evils of dishonesty and indolence have grown with the growth of big corporations, until they far exceed those evils in the public business." We read the papers. If a man doesn't want anything very much and is content to do nothing of much conse-

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

quence, it is as easy for him to be honest as it ever was. But if he wants to get very rich, or has aspirations that carry him deep into the competitions of business, to be honest becomes, it would seem, a highly complicated matter, wherein success, if achieved at all, seems apt to be achieved at the cost of whatever else he is after.

Do you think there is such a thing as absolute honesty? There are plenty of people who won't steal, if they realize it's stealing, and a good many who won't lie, if they realize it's lying, but when stealing or lying comes disguised as self-defence, or legitimate enterprise, they may feel differently. The safest theory seems to be that men are naturally dishonest—naturally prone to protect themselves by lies and evasions and to find their advantages in wiles, and that a high degree of integrity is an achievement of civilization or a triumph of superior souls.

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

A certain amount of honesty is now necessary for the successful transaction of most business. The law must be respected in cases where its infraction is likely to be punished. But what is the law as to honesty? Go back to one of the foundations of our written law. Take the ten commandments—one says: “Thou shalt not steal,” and another “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” Only those two bear directly on the subject. But another says: “Thou shalt not covet.” There comes the rub. Men who steal, sometimes get sent to prison, if the proof is satisfactory to the jury and the higher courts do not grant too many new trials. So, men who bear false witness are sometimes inconvenienced by action of the courts. But there is no attempt made to hinder men by legal process from coveting. On the contrary, some men who have shown themselves to be successfully covetous, and have man-

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

aged to acquire large quantities of their neighbour's possessions without being sent to jail, enjoy a large measure of the public respect.

I was going to say "without becoming amenable to law" instead of "without being sent to jail," but that wouldn't do. We don't seem to care much just now whether a successful money-maker becomes amenable to law or not, so long as the law doesn't actually catch and hold him. There are no laws against coveting, but there are laws against some of the practical manifestations of covetousness. There are laws restricting railroads from favouring one business concern to the prejudice of others in the same line; all sorts of laws regulating attempts to establish monopolies; laws general and particular which seek to prevent the successful swine from getting all their feet into the trough. But many of these laws seem to impose little or no moral obligation. Highly

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

respectable men, whose honesty in ordinary matters is not questioned, think nothing of breaking them, or hiring their employees to break them. They are afraid of nothing but being caught, and not much afraid of that, because they would not feel disgraced if they were caught breaking a statute. They would merely pay a fine and go on. If you make honesty include legality and consider statute-breaking dishonest, then honesty seems to be doubtful policy just now, for when you say "Honesty is the best policy," you mean business policy. You simply mean that, in the long run, it pays the most money. But it certainly seems to pay nowadays to disregard statutes.

It is not easy to say what honesty is in these times, because there is so much of the double standard in business, just as there usually is in a boys' school. It is as though pocket-picking and burglary were discountenanced, but highway rob-



## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

very allowed. A man who aspires to be an honest man, being questioned on this subject lately, said: "So many objectionable things that won't bear the light are necessary to be done in so many considerable business enterprises now, that for my part I prefer to keep out of active business. For if you start out to carry a project through, you don't want to fail, and to succeed you have to do what is necessary." Happily this fastidious man can live on his income without discomfort, but he is an able man, and with good brains he lives comparatively idle, partly because the things he covets most are clean hands and self-respect.

Perhaps business was always just as full of deviousness as it is now. Perhaps there was always a double standard of morals in it. Perhaps laws were always regarded as artificial obstacles to successful trade, which an able man might properly employ his wits to circumvent. Per-

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

haps the prevalent clamour about the crookedness of modern business methods is only a clamour of croakers and of men who praise the good old times. But there are some contemporary facts and circumstances which seem to support the contention that business morals are more muddled than usual. For one thing competition in business is unprecedentedly active. Generally speaking, the margin of profit is far smaller than it was twenty years ago, profitable opportunities are scarcer, and the number of persons who are watching to seize them is greater than it was. That has made business more like war than it used to be, and has made many people feel that all's fair in business, just as all's fair in war. Then there has been a vast growth of corporations, and corporations have no souls and not much moral sense. A corporation can't be damned. The worst that can happen to it is to be forced into bankruptcy. Sal-

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

vation for a corporation is dividends, and the men who manage corporations are prone to keep their corporation's salvation and their own personal salvation separate. Most of them as individuals have scruples and ideals of conduct, but when they work for the salvation of their corporation, they are apt to put their personal scruples aside. It is war and they are generals. If there are statutes in the way, they find a way around or through them; if there are rivals to crush—there always are—they crush them, if they can; if there are common councils or legislatures to bribe, they bribe them. Gather six upright men, no one of whom would steal an umbrella, no one of whom, perhaps, would steal or even smuggle a fur overcoat; organize them as a board of directors, and put it to them whether they shall disband or do what is necessary, and somehow what is necessary will usually be done if it is practicable. The

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

fact that you have six Dr. Jekylls on your board of directors does not seem to insure the board from becoming like Hyde.

And why? Well, division of responsibility is a great help to the conscience. And then your board of Jekylls knows that it is in competition with a board that it esteems to be all Hydes, and which will stick at nothing which seems necessary to success. Accordingly the board that is most faithful to its duty, to its stock-holders, including widows, orphans, and other trustful and deserving persons, is the one that does what is necessary and does it first.

Moreover, there is much to weaken the respect of directors, as well as individuals, for the product of law-making bodies. Laws are no longer handed down on stone tablets to a prophet on a smoking mountain. They are made by elective assemblies, at the instance of persons concerned.

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

Many kinds of business depend absolutely on favouring statutes, and many statutes are the result of the efforts of persons who expect to find a profit in them. The tariff which puts one concern up puts another down. The beaten party in a great struggle for commercial supremacy goes to Congress and gets a bill passed prohibiting its successful rival from continuing the practices by dint of which it won. Not unnaturally the victor regards the new law as simply a wile of the enemy carrying no moral obligation, and to be evaded if possible. "Strikers" with legislative influence introduce bills for the purpose of being paid to let them drop. The laws are not the immutable conditions under which business is to be done; they are part of the apparatus for doing business, and only immutable so long as no business influence is powerful enough to have them changed to suit its needs. And so laws, as laws, are not so much

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

respected as they should be, and because law and morals have been closely associated in times past, disregard or evasion of law tends to lower moral standards. Corporations which have no souls to be damned have pockets to be picked, and are even more busy in defending themselves from plunder than in offensive illegalities. Out in Montana, where the great copper mine fight is going on, it is averred that not the laws alone, but the courts are part of the apparatus of doing business, and that the success of an adventurous person who has fought a powerful trust has been due to his ability to control the election of judges who favour his side. Happily the courts as a rule are still respected, and it is a very rare thing for the integrity of an American judge to be doubted. But the best courts cannot punish law-breakers who are not caught, nor all of those who are caught.

I hear it said of foot-ball—that very

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

serious sport so much vaunted as a means of fitly training strenuous spirits for the the battle of contemporary life—that the man who can most successfully evade the rules is rated as the best player; that whatever effective act the referee cannot see is good play, whether rules forbid it or not; that the last word of the successful coach to his men is, “Do up the man opposite you!” How the opponent is “done up” does not matter unless the referee sees and objects. The rules are for him to enforce, not necessarily for the players to obey. And so it seems to be in modern business. An able and highly respected lawyer said to a friend about a year ago, that the greater part of his law practice consisted in advising men of business how to do illegal things with safety. He has since died, leaving life insurance enough to pay back half a million dollars he had stolen, and make his heirs rich besides. I wonder whether

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

his familiarity with contemporary business methods had affected his own moral sense, or whether a naturally defective moral sense had made him successful as a business man's advisor! Perhaps he got tired of subtleties, for his own stealings were of the simplest and crudest criminality, and his lying was downright and well stuck to. Dishonesty was the height of folly for him, for he defied statute, common and moral law, deceived those who trusted him and stole from his friends and his clients. Dishonesty that keeps faith with no one is of course as impolitic as the copy-books aver, but this current dishonesty that disregards statutes, elects legislatures or bribes them, and fights the devil with fire, is that bad policy also?

It was said with humour and with truth of a modern man of business that he never violated the penal code. Can a man who will not buy a vote, nor bribe



## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

a legislature, nor consciously violate a statute, afford, in these days, to own a railroad? Could he succeed as manager of a great competitive trust? Of course, such a man could make a living. He could practise medicine, or be a minister, or write stories for the magazines, or paint pictures. He could even practise law, though possibly at some disadvantage in some particulars, and there are many lines of business, some of them highly profitable, in which he would not necessarily be embarrassed. But when it comes to great competitive business, with labour unions and their business agents, sharp and powerful business rivals, legislative strikers, and all that host to contend with, could he get along? *Inter arma leges silent.* Isn't business on that scale too much like war to be conducted on lawful peace lines? If our man respected the law, would the law protect him, or would it merely hold him while his pockets were rifled?

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

These questions are too much for me to answer. I only read what other people read and hear what other people hear, of tariff-made fortunes, of fortune-made tariffs, of men who own State legislatures and have laws made to order, of business concerns that habitually defy statutes or evade them, of men so rich that money is tight when they close their hands and easy when they open them. One can understand that a great many sudden turns and shifty expedients may be necessary when the factors that control success are so varied and so mutable.

We read the story of the Shipyard Trust; we recall what we have heard of the proceedings prior to the formation of the Whiskey Trust, where rival gangs found it necessary to burn down competing distilleries; we read Miss Tarbell's tale of the Standard Oil Company; we see a Senator sitting in a Senate that once rejected him, and we see his great

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

house rising on Fifth Avenue; and further up Mr. Carnegie's great house, and the ambitious dwellings of the steel men. We meditate on legislative corruption, and speculate as to what proportion of the huge gains of the steel men was due to tariffs improperly maintained and to the power of compelling railroads to grant unlawful favours. We take it for granted that in nearly every great business that depends upon a public franchise or upon special legislation, money has been corruptly used to elect legislators, influence legislations or pacify objectors. We are not very much shocked about it. We feel that it had to be used or there would have been no great improvements in transportation or manufacture, and no profit in the business. We admire the men who get results, even though they get them by unlawful means. And much of our admiration is warranted, for there is a great deal more to the success of the commer-

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

cially successful men than mere unscrupulousness. There is great talent usually, great energy, generalship, courage, and executive force. Mere rapacity we don't presume to condemn. As I said, the commandment against coveting seems to be obsolete, and to covet one's neighbour's business, his factory, his railroad, his bonds, and his stocks, and make him give them up, isn't wrong according to our code. We still feel that a man should not covet his neighbour's wife, but if he does, and gets her, we are not very disagreeable about it. A large, aggressive, calculated covetousness results in the consolidation of interests and in vast economies of administration, manufacture, and distribution. It is a law of nature that the rivers shall flow into the sea. Hurrah for the sea! Mr. Rockefeller and others seem to have taught us that it is the lawful aspiration of a righteous man to be the sea and receive, and

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

if necessary extort, the tribute of the rivers.

If limitless rapacity is admirable, if it is the duty of the man with ten talents to make them a hundred, and the duty of the man with a hundred talents to make them a hundred thousand, I don't see that the degree of honesty that would hinder a man from breaking statutes is any longer the best business policy, or even practicable. You may say that it is a disadvantage to be made the steward of interests so important and valuable that it is necessary to hire men to lie and to bribe, and to break statutes in defence of them. I agree that much may be said in support of that view. I agree as to the advantages of humbler circumstances to the attainment of which a high degree of rapacity is not necessary, and which may be enjoyed without violence to any of the commandments, or even of the revised statutes. But that has to do with morals

## IS HONESTY STILL THE BEST POLICY?

and ideals and the concerns of the spirit. We are considering the business proposition. Let us not be so sweeping. Let us make that old saw read: "Some honesty is good policy." That's true. We can all agree to it. Without some honesty business could not be done. Credit would go to the dogs and money would be tight all the time. A broker's nod must be as good as his bond; bookmakers must not be welchers; goods must be according to sample; contracts must be fulfilled. Honesty to that extent is certainly indispensable. But when it comes to statute-breaking, if you would avoid that, take care what business you go into, or give over altogether aspirations that are too lofty, and say with Horace, even if, like him, you don't mean it: "Naked I seek the camp of those who desire nothing."\*

*October, 1904.*

\*NOTE: A great deal has happened to make honesty politic in the four years since the above discourse was written.

## SOME ADVANTAGES OF THE COMMON LOT

WE are used to look grave when a young man takes a wife unto himself with what seems to us to be undue precipitation, and if presently we see a young family growing punctually up around him, maybe we wag our heads a bit and say it was a pity that young Buxton did not wait until he had got a round or two further up the ladder. We say we don't like to see a likely young fellow overweighted at the start, and we know of men of promise who incurred domestic blessings so early in life and in such numbers that all their lives they never did better than to stagger on under their load. We say they never had a chance to get where they belonged, and we fear it is going to be so with that young Buxton.

## SOME ADVANTAGES OF

Maybe it is. It depends a great deal upon Buxton and what sort he is, and how hard he can work and to what purpose, and how long he can deny himself such expensive luxuries as appendicitis and typhoid fever. Of course, Buxton must have a start—must have learned his trade and see his work ahead of him—before he marries; or else he must have means of maintenance that do not depend upon his labours. If he is just an improvident creature who is trusting to luck, no doubt he will come to grief, and we wash our hands of him. It depends also on the other young person, and what sort she is and what she knows, and what she was brought up to. And it depends somewhat on circumstances. Circumstances are always waiting and wanting to cut into the game of life, and though they don't often, and ought never to, control it, they certainly do make differences, and alter some cases.



## THE COMMON LOT

But if Buxton has got his start and seems to be the right sort, and if that demure young Lucy seems to have some hard sense and due constancy, in whatever disguise, under her ribbons and muslin, let's not croak unduly nor forecast a lot of bogie troubles that are not actually in sight. Keeping body and soul together is not quite so desperately complicated a task as some of us have grown to think it. Lots of people don't starve to death. All the folks we see in the street are clothed, somehow, though some in gayer raiment than others. Let us not even despair when there are little Buxtons, not even if they seem at first to crowd on one another's heels. They won't crowd one another nearly so hard as they crowd Buxton, and if he is so built as to stand the pressure, it will do him good.

It is an ill fate for a man to be working merely for himself. That motive is

## SOME ADVANTAGES OF

proper enough to begin with. Duty as well as self-interest demands that he should justify his presence in the world. But to want for yourself all that is coming to you, is not graceful. It seems a bit greedy. To want it for a wife and children is selfishness so deodorized and etherialized that it becomes very like a virtue. When Erskine's chance finally came after a long period of brieflessness, he bore himself in court at the very first go with such audacious ability as made his reputation on the spot. Some one asked him afterward, "How did you do it? What kept you up to such a pitch as that?" He said, "I felt my children tugging at my gown and crying, 'Father, bring us bread.'"

I admit that a wife and young children are not a sure advantage to a poor young man in politics, unless politics dovetail into his other business; I admit that a large and early family seems often a doubtful

## THE COMMON LOT

advantage to a beginning minister or painter; but neither politics nor the ministry nor art are money-making professions, though in all of them there are rewards—even pecuniary ones—that come to energy and industry and talent, and do not come to lazy men. Nothing is better at the right time for a young man who has in him the making of a strong man, than a burden that is well up to the measure of his strength. And certainly in those callings in which success is measured, however imperfectly, by the annual harvest of dollars, the imperative need of money is a very useful spur.

If Buxton does no more than merely support his family and keep out of debt; if he never gets rich, never rides in cabs, never gets to Europe, never lays up much more than a modest provision of life insurance, and his nose is kept pretty near the grindstone most of his days to do that, is even such a prospect fit to daunt him

## SOME ADVANTAGES OF

in his matrimonial hopes? I don't think it should. As against marrying the woman he loves, and rearing and educating good children to love him and come after him, what has life to offer that is better? We Americans all want something better than the common lot. If we don't think that some day we are going to be rich, or that some day our children are going to be rich or in some way remarkable, we are disposed to question the profitableness of existence and of raising families. Yet the common lot, if one brings the right spirit to it, and contemplates it from the right point of view, is far from bad. It is a natural condition, that is one good point about it. It is consistent with the highest spiritual development. It abounds in little daily opportunities of service and of happiness, and the door of promotion can never be closed to it. The common lot is to live and work and reproduce your species. No

## THE COMMON LOT

lot that eliminates any of these incidents is necessarily to be preferred to it or will be preferred except for unusual reasons by a wise person who has a choice. To better the common lot for himself is every man's privilege, and there would be little progress in the world if he did not try to do it. But it is a delusion of self-indulgence to reject, or postpone too long, any of the common blessings that it offers with the idea that there are better things in life to be had for the price of those. There is no single interest in life, for example, to be compared with children. The world is practically agreed about them. Taking them by and large, nothing pays so well to have; nothing pays so well to work for. The rearing of them combines the moral satisfaction of performing a duty, with the speculative excitement of a quest for buried treasure. Blessed is he whose quiver is full of them, but not too full; not in these times. The

## SOME ADVANTAGES OF

blessings of the common lot in our day do not include a large family. That calls for a lot that is out of common.

The suggestion that a large, early family might not be an advantage to a beginning minister, should not be understood to imply any failure to appreciate the advantageous position from which ministers' children make their attempt to solve the problem of prosperity. The proportion of them who achieve what we somewhat narrowly esteem to be success, seems to be exceptionally large, and the children of professors and teachers and of judges have the same sort of advantage. I don't know what the statistics are about them, but there is Mr. Root, a professor's son; Judge Taft, a judge's son; Mr. Cleveland, a minister's son; Mr. Harri-man, a minister's son; Mr. Morgan, a minister's grandson, and every reader can extend the list indefinitely out of his own acquaintance. It is good luck to

## THE COMMON LOT

have a minister back of you somewhere in your family. A judge will do as well, perhaps, in these days, or a professor—an Agassiz, say, who had no time to make money. Somehow the descendants of really superior men who had no time to make money seem apt to have both the capacity and disposition to make up for their forebears' neglect. The point is that the minister's children or the judge's or the professor's usually get all the education that is to be had, and sound moral training with it. And even the judges are apt to be not so rich but that their children may learn self-help, and the minister's and professor's children are apt to have a sharp enough experience of the inconvenience of limited means, to start them in life with an appetite. There are considerable advantages about starting in life with an appetite, though of course, it may be too voracious and neglectful of niceties. There is Jonson

## SOME ADVANTAGES OF

who is paid for knowing certain things and exercising his judgment, and who makes money so easily that I think he merely hangs out a money-bag overnight and the watchman fills it. Jonson's father had quantities of learning, but the market for what he knew was bad in the place where he lived, and privation was liberally mixed into his lot. But he incurred responsibility for the maintenance of a boy, and the boy was bright, and the father having little else to give him, personally filled him up with all the knowledge he could cram into him. No doubt, he grounded him in honesty besides, and having done what he could, let him out, a mere boy still, to make a crop and harvest it in the busy world. The boy went out with good faculties already trained and proceeded to get more knowledge and to use it. But the new knowledge that he got had to do with business and was marketable, and by the time he was grown



## THE COMMON LOT

up and had filled his head full of it, there was no more short commons for him or his.

One point of this story seems to be that if you have a bright boy and teach him well and bring him up under circumstances that compel him to appreciate the value of money, he will go and get some when he is big enough. The story works that way: it can't be helped. But the preferred point is that a parent who is bad at earning money and cannot do what he wants to do for his children in that way, may possibly do even better for them out of the work of his own heart and his own mind.

With the increase of wealth in this country and the general rise in wages, the practice of looking upon children as the possible source of revenue seems to have lost very much of its vogue. Two generations ago high schools were scarce, colleges were few and small, and school-

## SOME ADVANTAGES OF

ing was over for the great majority of children at a comparatively early age. Most of the boys went to work at fifteen, or sooner, and their wages belonged to their parents until they were twenty-one unless indeed they managed to buy their time from their fathers, or to find some one who would buy it for them. And commonly, though of course not universally, the fathers enforced their rights, and fairly well-to-do men gathered in their children's wages as a matter of course. The old rule still holds, and the old practice still obtains in families where the ways-and-means problem is one of pressing exigency, but nowadays among people who are not desperately pressed, the prevailing sentiment is that as between parent and child, it is very much more blessed in money matters for the parent to give than to receive.

The old practice simplified the raising of families, and families were larger in

## THE COMMON LOT

those times. The families now in which this old rule governs are apt to be larger than the families in which it is unknown. It isn't an unjust rule. It tends to hold families together and to make the family, rather than the individual, the social unit, and those are good results. But our ambitious modern fashion of keeping boys as well as girls, as long as we can at their books or in some school of training, makes better for the stimulation of energy in working parents. We think it is better for the children, too, and profitable all around in the long run.

Let us try to be hopeful, then, about all the newly married, and especially let us not worry about that young Buxton, or concede that he is in danger of blighting his career by getting married while he is still a hopeful subject for that condition. He is none too precious to be supporting a family, and if the effort drives him a little, it is more likely to do

## THE COMMON LOT

him good than harm. To spend a little less money for champagne and a little more for sterilized milk won't really prejudice either his happiness or his efficiency as part of the great social machine.

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

IT was related two months ago how the "suffragettes" stormed the House of Commons and, failing to get what they wanted, would not be appeased, but stormed the more and were dragged to court. There some of them, disdaining to give bonds to keep the peace, were gratified by short terms of imprisonment. They were gratified by it because the outbreak was an advertisement of the seriousness and urgency of the conviction of the "suffragettes" that Englishwomen ought to vote, and that it was time that Englishmen made up their minds to share that duty with them.

In France, they tell us, the efforts toward a more complete separation of state and church and the elimination of

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

church influence from politics have led the Catholic Church to favour woman suffrage. In England some of the foremost statesmen, both of the government and of the opposition, profess to have come to the belief that women ought to vote. In this country when that venerable periodical, the *North American Review*, lately became a fortnightly, and for the first time set up some definite opinions of its own, the first opinion with which it accentuated its new departure was that American women were now ready for the suffrage and ought to have it. All these incidents have brought a well-worn topic a little more than usual to the fore.

The great mass of American men and women are not persuaded as yet that women ought to have the suffrage. The idea of woman suffrage is perfectly familiar. There is a little company of women who are devoted to its accomplishment,

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

and another little company of women who have been constrained to organize against it for fear that the aggressive suffragists would win their fight by default if nobody met them with definite and organized opposition. But the mass of the people do not bother their heads about it one way or the other, and the attitude of most of the more thoughtful people toward it is merely contemplative. They are ready to be persuaded that it is expedient that women should vote, but as yet they have not been persuaded. Not being for it they are necessarily against it, and, joined with all the mass of people who do not think about it at all, they constitute the enormous *vis inertiae* which the aggressive suffragists must overcome before they can have their way.

Are they going to overcome it? A huge conservative force that, on the whole, is fairly well satisfied with things

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

as they are and dreads the jolt of any fundamental change, is an exceedingly valuable asset of any people, and makes in most important measure for peace, order, and continuity of government. But as where such a force is lacking there is change, disquiet, and insecurity, so where it is unduly preponderant it halts progress. Our country is certainly not old-fogy. There are observers who hold it to be more conservative than Great Britain, and that the very freedom of thought and license of speech and printed words which obtain here, give so much vent for the ebullitions of the restless and allow so much steam to be blown off, that our land is really more conservative than most of the monarchies of Europe. But still it is not so set in the ways that are, as to be in danger of missing advantage for lack of mental energy to embrace it. Theoretically it is quite possible to persuade the American people



## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

that woman suffrage is a good thing, and to induce them when persuaded to establish it.

The division on the woman-suffrage question does not run on the lines of sex. If the women wanted to vote and nothing hindered them but the difficulty of getting the men to consent to it, that would not hinder them long. They could get the consent of the men to anything under the sun as to which they were agreed. The men, now, would be glad to give the suffrage to the individual women who want it if the thing could stop there. But it couldn't. If some women in any State are to be allowed to vote, all women in that State must be allowed to vote; and if all women have the privilege of voting, it immediately becomes the duty of the conscientious and responsible women to exercise that privilege to the very best of their ability. A limited suffrage can be given to women who can

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

qualify for it. Women can be invited to vote for school officers, and women who are taxpayers can and should be invited to vote for municipal officers, and both of these things have already been done in many cases. But an unlimited suffrage can hardly be given to a limited number of women. Even if it is theoretically possible, it is not thought of as a project that is practically worthy of consideration. In every State, if unlimited suffrage is conferred on women at all, it will be conferred on all of them who are of voting age, and on the same terms that men have it. All the women will be expected to vote, and just as much pains will be taken to influence their votes and get their votes out as is now taken with the votes of men.

More of them, too, will run for public office than do at present. There is no doubt that there are many public offices now restricted to men, which competent

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

women might fill efficiently. The question would be rather what offices they were not suited to. The other day the federal district attorney in New York appointed a woman lawyer to be special assistant United States district attorney to prosecute an employment agent charged with sending immigrants to lumber and turpentine camps in the South, where they were held in peonage. This woman, Mrs. Quackenbos, had this work intrusted to her because it was through her efforts, including visits to the Southern camps complained of, that the federal authorities came to be interested in the case. There is no doubt that there are many individual women who are capable of creditable performance of most of the public services now commonly rendered (not always creditably) by men. Women at a pinch can usually do men's work, provided that they have a fair chance to learn it. So can men do women's work, and they are

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

particularly successful as cooks and dress-makers. Nevertheless there is something approaching a general agreement that the existing division of labour, by which certain tasks usually fall to men and certain others to women, is on the whole a division that suits both the women and the men, and one that it is expedient to preserve. In Colorado, where women vote, the papers say that women have not proved popular candidates for office, though they seem to be faithful and effectual voters.

The remark that the early suffragists were fond of exploding—that the suffrage was denied to women, idiots, and criminals—never had anything more than a rhetorical value. Perhaps the intelligence and capacity of women [in certain lines have come to be more respected than they were fifty years ago; and justly, on the ground that the education of women is broader and deeper now than it was

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

then, and their participation in affairs is much more extensive. But the withholding of the suffrage from women was never based so much on disparagement of woman's intelligence as on a disbelief that direct participation in government belonged in the class of duties that are in her line. The controlling influence that affects the opinions of men about woman suffrage, is that they like women as they are and don't want to favour anything that may change them. The same influence controls the opinions of the great majority of women. On the whole they like their job as it is, or at least prefer it as it is, to what they think it might be if modified by woman suffrage. The common run of men are not hoggish of political power. The difficulty is to get them to put a high enough value on it. They do not regard it as too precious a birth-right to be shared with women. Their opinion is rather that woman is too

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

precious to be hampered with an additional obligation.

Perhaps the suffragists will laugh at that. Of course it is not universally true, but substantially it is true. It may be said that mere selfish regard for his own convenience may make a man reluctant to have his wife vote, just as it sometimes makes a woman try to deny to her maid-servants the inalienable privilege of having beaus. Such is the imperfection of our fallen natures that even American husbands are sometimes selfish about their wives, and so are sons about their mothers. But how is it about daughters? Does there exist on a large scale anywhere so notorious an infatuation as that of the American father with his daughters? Is he selfish about *them*? Is there any good thing on the earth that he does not want to get for them? Would he raise a finger to keep them from voting if they wanted to vote, or

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

if he thought it might be profitable to them?

He would not object. Regard for his own convenience would not influence him, for he would be delighted to have his daughters' company to the polls. Neither would he be concerned about the convenience of his future sons-in-law, for his forecasting mind is hostile, if anything, to sons-in-law, and, so far as he is himself concerned, he is apt to think of them only as a necessary evil. If he does not bestir himself to get votes for his girls, it is purely because he does not think it would pay his girls to have votes.

Almost always men reflect the opinions of their women folks in this matter. You will recall that Robinson, the eloquent champion of woman suffrage, was the husband of one of the Brown girls, and that all the Browns were as ardent for woman suffrage as their parents were for anti-slavery. Robinson could not have stayed

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

comfortably married in that family if he had not come out for woman suffrage. Of course he came out for it. He would have been a foolish man and neglectful of his obligations as a husband and a son-in-law if he hadn't.

So when Smith suddenly declared for woman suffrage in his newspaper, you wonder what put that idea into Smith's head. You asked him, and he said, oh, he was tired of men voters. You wondered some more; recalled that any lively, unexpected idea or declaration was useful to a newspaper, but still wondered, until it flashed across your mind that Mrs. Smith might have come to feel she would like to vote. Of course either his own wife or some other man's wife put him up to it.

The most important of woman's rights is the right to have children of her own, and raise them. To vote may help or harm her, but not much either way. It



## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

is not a vital matter. The other right is vital; a true birthright. Our society takes a vast deal of pains to secure its realization, but not enough. It is the first desire of most parents—of all wise ones—that their girls shall marry good men and be fit wives for them, but the aim is imperfectly accomplished. Some observers say that American parents are at fault in not realizing betimes the imperative need of laying up money for their daughters' marriage portions. Perhaps so. At any rate too large a proportion of our women, for one reason or another, do not marry, and go to their graves an honourable and useful but pathetic procession of women deprived of their rights. There is a sentiment, how well founded need not here be discussed, that women, if they had the suffrage, would interest themselves in politics to the detriment of their vastly more important family interests. They might go into

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

politics young and neglect to get married, just as in too many cases they now are constrained to go into money-making occupations and (some of them) neglect to get married. That sentiment has a good deal to do with keeping ballots out of women's hands.

If it were practicable to give the suffrage to all spinsters at the age of thirty-five, a good deal could be said in favour of it. A great many of them would be very valuable voters. It would add interest to their lives, and would be in the nature of a reparation made to them by society for the loss of a vastly greater privilege which the imperfection of our social apparatus has caused them to miss. It may even be suggested that the vote of every bachelor of thirty-five should be taken away and given to a spinster. That might be just, but probably not expedient, for the reason that grown-up bachelors are apt to be useful politicians

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE

for the same reason that spinsters might be, because they are not distracted by family ties from the cares of state. One would like to see a trial of the experiment of letting all the unmarried women over thirty-five vote, and especially all the school teachers and other self-supporting women. It would give them power, and concede to them equality of privilege in certain directions with the unmarried men, which certainly most of them deserve. But whether woman suffrage, having progressed so far as that, could be stopped there, is a question. And probably most of the spinsters would not care to vote, for women are still women, even though thirty-five and unmated.

*January, 1907.*

## THE SEASHORE

“As was, and is, and evermore shall be.” May we say that of the sea and its shore? Of the sea perhaps, unless our thought is very comprehensive and deals with distances in time even more profound than the geological periods. But if we go on and add, “World without end, Amen,” we get into trouble, applying to things finite—largest things though they be—words that belong to the infinite and illimitable. But so far as things finite go the sea is such an extremely remote back number, and promises to keep along into so extremely remote a future, that we in our little day are well enough warranted in thinking of it as the thing—the one thing—that always was and always will be.

Before the mountains were brought

## THE SEASHORE

forth, there was the sea, veiled in mists and vapours, waiting with immeasurable patience for shores to be adjusted to it. In the Lord's good time they were adjusted, gradually, tentatively, and with successive fittings and readjustments; paroxysmally on an enormous scale; less obtrusively, by wind and wave, attrition, and deposit, on a smaller but indefatigably steady one. Compared with the sea itself its shores are modern, but compared with anything else, some of them reach back to a creditable antiquity—not so far back as the mountains, but a long ways. It is a long time since continental forms have changed, but when one comes to details, even the rock-bound coasts, slowly rising or falling, change their contours somewhat from cycle to cycle, while some of the sandy ones shift their unstable outlines from year to year.

But variable or not, the seashore is always there, and that the sands shift

## THE SEASHORE

and the rocks submit, however reluctantly, to the persuasion of the ages, doesn't greatly affect the main proposition. For æons uncounted there has been that irregular line about countries and continents where the land meets the water, and whenever that line ceases to exist there will be no land-born creatures left alive to regret its discontinuance. Beyond any plausible doubt it will last our time, and I am glad to believe it will, for there is no part of the land that is more indispensable to the satisfaction of us who dwell on it than its edges.

I suspect the seashore was the old home of the ancestors of all living people, so strong the impulse is to get back to it, and so substantial are the satisfactions of return. There isn't enough of it for us all to live on all the time, and even if there were enough, it is undisputed that there are important things to

## THE SEASHORE

be done inland, and that a due proportion of us must live inland most of the time and do them. But observe how common it is for folk who have managed to accomplish their important inland duties so that they can be spared for a time, to move themselves and their families off to the seashore and stay there as long as things are pleasant. It is this propensity that has made the Atlantic seaboard from the southern end of New Jersey to the northern edge of Maine look like a continuous village. Villas, cottages, and hotels stretch along a thousand miles of sinuous coast, crowded often so close together that there is not room for a bathing-house between, and leaving only the most inaccessible reaches bare of human habitation. The Atlantic seaboard with its great cities has a considerable population of its own that likes the sea air and the sight and contact of salt water in the summer; and since that popula-

## THE SEASHORE

tion, constantly crowding in increased numbers to its shore, finds its needs in competition with demands of prospered families from the thriving inland States, it has become evident that the demand for the seashore is fast outrunning the supply, and that pretty much all the available coast remaining is destined soon to be cut up into house-lots which will be owned by people who can afford that luxury.

This prospect in very recent years has had the good effect of stirring up some far-seeing and public-spirited people to exert themselves to promote the purchase and reservation of strips of seashore for the public use. In New England the late Charles Eliot, the landscape architect, devoted a share of his useful energies to this work with admirable results, promoting the reservation of several very important strips of shore in New England, and spreading with great diligence



## THE SEASHORE

and energy in and beyond New England the idea that such reservations are exceedingly desirable. When he died that particular work lost the most efficient friend it had. It has gone on. New York talks about making a great seashore park at Coney Island, and many other like plans are under discussion or in process of fulfilment. But there is still a vast deal left to be done in the same line. Every seashore village that has an eye to its own interests ought to secure, where it is still possible, such a strip of beach as will insure to its own people and its summer population, present and to come, due access to salt water and enjoyment of all its incidents and privileges.

The seashore villages have been and are extremely short-sighted in this matter. The seashore can support an immense summer population within a mile, more or less, of the shore. But the shore itself is absolutely limited in extent, and

## THE SEASHORE

every village that allows its whole shore to go into the hands of private owners, so that it cannot offer bath-houses and bathing-beaches, seats on the beach, wharves, and boat-anchorage to its summer visitors, not only allows itself to be cut off from its own use of the sea, but deprives itself in great measure of the chances of gain that come with the increase of the summer population. If people can get to the water, they will go and live, not necessarily on it, but near it. But they will not care to live near it if the whole water-front has been so taken up by private owners that they cannot go swimming, nor have reasonable use of any part of the shore, except by the benevolence of some friend. Most of the seaboard villages have common lands somewhere which have come down to them from their provident forbears, but the old commons and parks are seldom on the shore. They usually form

## THE SEASHORE

one side of the main village street. The need of saving more of the shore for public use than a wharf or two for coasters to tie up to is something that has developed within thirty or forty years. It is a need that as yet has been very imperfectly met, and to provide for it grows year by year more difficult and more costly.

Lakes, great and small, have their charms—exceedingly substantial ones—and their invaluable uses, too, but they are not the sea, and may not rival its inspirations. They don't smell like it; they don't taste like it; they don't feel like it; they have not its illimitable suggestiveness. There is nothing on the bottoms of our American lakes—the best lot of lakes in the world—that is really worth meditating about. No Spanish galleons with bones and treasure in them; no triremes, no long boats of Norse pirates, no corals, no considerable store

## THE SEASHORE

of pearls. And beyond them what is there? The Spanish Main? Araby? The Isles of Greece? No; beyond the biggest of them is nothing more than Canada; and though Canada has its history, fairly well peopled with romantic figures, it is very modern. Down to the seashore comes all history. The sea is the one great common possession of all mankind; the one great playground and battle-ground and provision-house and roadway of the nations. Attempts have been made to parcel it out to this country or that. Spain once claimed, and England disputed, dominion over vast stretches of it; popes have named owners for oceans the limits of which were still conjectural. But all that has passed. Nobody claims the high seas any more. They are ours. The wind blows over the great lakes and comes clear and cool to their borders. It makes good air to breathe—wholesome, stimulating—but it

## THE SEASHORE

does not come as the sea-winds do, freighted with messages from all mankind and from all history.

One of the advantages of living in a great city is that one is touched and animated by great currents of life. In spite of all the drawbacks of it, the crowding, the driving, the competition for space, for air, for a livelihood, there are compensations in its ceaseless activities and in the intimacies of its human associations which become exceedingly valuable to persons who have once become used to them. Full streets and hurrying crowds make an atmosphere which comes in time to seem vivifying and desirable. It may be a perverted taste—this taste for great cities—but it is certainly a growing one; and while it may lead finally to exhaustion of energy, it is at least an effectual antidote to dry-rot. There is an analogous stimulation about the sea. The seashore-dweller,

## THE SEASHORE

too, is always in touch with an immense living force that is always in motion, subject to ceaseless changes, terrible, amiable, beneficent, and cruel by turns, giving life and taking it, but never indifferent and never torpid. The seashore-dweller is a cosmopolitan in his way. In older days in our country, before railroads simplified and cheapened transportation, the coast-dweller had the advantage of his neighbours inland in getting away from home more, and seeing distant towns and their people. Every seacoast village then had coast-trading schooners, and the bigger towns with better harbours had whaling-fleets, and other ships that sailed for any port that promised profit. Not much of that deep-sea adventure is left to them nowadays, when a large part of the coastwise traffic has gone to the railroads, and steamers plying between all the great ports in the world have pretty much monopolized the

## THE SEASHORE

transportation on the deep seas. But the coast-dwellers still fish, and they still have the society of the ocean, and the Gloucester fleet at least still sails to the Newfoundland Banks, and a hardy population, quick of hand and eye, still lives by the salt water.

But the great seaside industry of our day is the cultivation of the summer boarder. Deliberately, and in many cases reluctantly, the coast-dweller has come to regard him and his family as a fortuitous occurrence singularly adapted to yield the means of support. He provides for him at a price; sells him land when he insists, or rents him a cottage and sells him such of the necessities of life as do not come in cans or bottles or paper boxes. The master of a clipper-ship that sailed out of Boston twenty-five years ago told me that he had been offered the command of a transatlantic liner, but had refused it because it was not to his taste to keep a

## THE SEASHORE

hotel. It is not always to the coast-dweller's taste to conduct a summer home for people who live in towns, but he does it because it is the thing that has come to his hand to do, and because the seafaring occupations of his fathers have either passed away or diminished in variety and extent, or become less profitable than this shore business, which in the last fifty years has yearly pressed in in increased volume and demanded to be attended to. And so now when the great ports that the railroads run to have got pretty much all the shipping business, and mineral oil and gas and electricity light the world that once burned whale-oil, the pleasure of the ocean's invigorating and improving company has come to be the attraction that keeps the coast villages still prosperous, and fills the little harbours with little sails.

Very improving company it is for folks who are harmonious with it. It does



## THE SEASHORE

good to some—to the young especially—by affording them occupation, and to others by enabling them to dispense with occupation. Women who have come to be aware of nerves, tired men who have worked hard, sit and look at the sea, watch distant sails of boats beating back and forth, keep tab on the tide, listen to the wash of the waves on the shore, or at other times to the gurgle of the water under the bows of a sail-boat. They take books down to the shore or out in boats, and don't read them, because the sea has better things to tell them than are in most of the books, and tells them better. And the sea-creatures are company for them—the periwinkles, the jellyfish, the starfish, the hermit-crabs, and all the other crabs, the oysters, the lobsters, and the unostentatious clams. A stretch of sand or mud that the tide plays over is more than a stretch of sand. It is a marine garden-patch, full of life, interest,

## THE SEASHORE

and even profit. The stunted, stubborn, wind-blown cedars that keep obstinate hold of the unstable soil their roots have grasped are more than stunted trees. They are arboreal soldiers, always in a fight for life, exemplars of the unending struggle for existence. One honours them for their experience.

And where are there such stage-effects as the sea contributes to? Have you sometimes seen sunrise on the water? A score of mornings every summer—two-score maybe—it is worth getting up to watch, and of course that is saying a great deal. What magic the setting sun works we all know, and what unreal and surpassing wonders the moon can compass with the waves to help her. And where are there such smells as the sea-smells? Even the bad ones are good, for they are salt and wholesome and full of flavour. Let us not disparage the fragrance of a flower-garden, or of the wild

## THE SEASHORE

grape, or the locust blossom. Praise the Lord for those benefits, but praise Him even more heartily for the common, inexhaustible smell of salt water. History tells of the exultant cries of Xenophon's Greeks when, with all their weary parasangs at last behind them, they faced the sea. To them it meant home, liberty, the end of perils and of tribulations. It may never mean quite all of that to us, but even to us it does speak of permanency and of freedom, and even in our eyes it is the one thing that always looks just as it used to look, that time does not dwarf, that fashion does not alter, and that never needs to be restored.

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

FOR the toilers of the sea there will be sea-shore labours that come as part of the day's work, but for us, whose workshops are on the dry land, the ideal occupation, when we escape from them to the sea-shore, will be to do nothing. That is an employment that, faithfully pursued in its due season, is richly productive of benefits, and it is one of the most appreciated merits of the seashore that it encourages and extenuates the do-nothing attitude, and by its charms and wiles and changes, and the shifting panorama of its spectacles, beguiles the do-nothing looker-on into wholesome forgetfulness of his own inactivity. The sea, being never idle itself, easily persuades its visitor that it is doing all that is necessary to be done, and that the only duty that

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

an observer need concern himself about is the easy one of visual inspection. If he has a mind to test the sea's temperature from time to time by dipping himself into it, that is well enough, and will tend to discipline his energies and lull them back into a receptive state; and if his mind, even at its idlest, insists upon working just a little, there are always the habits of the sea to be studied. That will not tire him, nor prejudice any of the benefits of his repose, for the sea's habits are enough like human habits to be interesting, and enough unlike them to be restful and refreshing by contrast.

Consider the punctuality of the tides. Human punctuality is apt to be more of a virtue than of a grace. It is compatible with unlovely qualities, prone to self-assertion and severe expectation. There are saintly people who are punctual out of pure consideration for others, but the more prevalent sort of punctual

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

people like as little to be kept waiting as to be late themselves. The tides are irresistibly punctual, but with a redeeming idiosyncrasy. They are an hour late every day. They never come, they never go, until they get ready. Ships and bathers and boatmen and clam-diggers may wait for them or not, as they will. They care not. They wait for no man, nor ask any man to wait for them. And yet the tides are responsible and to be depended on. You can set a clock by them. The hands on their dial are the anchored sail-boats that swing around when the tide turns. And while they are responsible, they are not tiresomely exact. They conspire together with the winds and the moon, the signs of the zodiac, the seasons and the almanac-makers, and sweep in much farther and then out much farther some days than others. That is one of the details that make their habits so much more soothing

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

and inspiring than the habits of the man who turns the same corner at precisely thirteen minutes after eight every morning. The punctual man of business is a nicely adjusted cog in a supplementary machine. The tides, too, are parts of a machine. They are great fly-wheels revolving majestically in the power-house of the earth. Man's punctuality is a bit wearisome, though not nearly as wearisome as the lack of it; but the tides, splendidly subordinate to the mind that drives the universe, share and impart something of the majesty of that life-giving will. They are not tiresome, but restful. They soothe. They tell of law that is neither petty nor partial; of order tranquil in the sublimity of the might that directs it; of design executed without intervention of imperfect human tools.

The sea is orderly, of course. What is ordered is orderly by natural conse-

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

quence, but the sea is orderly after its own fashion, not with overnice, pernickety methods, but on a large, indulgent scale that leaves a clean, decent beach most of the time. It makes no complaint of the shiftlessness of folks who leave things around where they shouldn't be left. Drop newspapers on the beach if you like, or banana-skins, clam-shells, almost anything except broken glass. It will be gone with the next tide, and no fuss made about it. Nothing will be left but a few shreds of clean seaweed, and may be a periwinkle's shell, with or without its tenant. Anything that will float will go, and there comes in the sea's power to discipline and train the shore people. Indulgent as it is in cleaning up after them and smoothing out their tracks and carrying off their rubbish, it gives them no whit of encouragement to be heedless or to impose on its good nature. It is only their servant when they



## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

respect the terms of its service. Leave a boot loose within its reach, out it goes on the preoccupied tide, along with the newspapers and the banana-skins. Indifference to the sea will not do. Its regularities are to be respected; also its irregularities. It makes no scruple of having moods and fits of temper. For days together it is bland, soothing, accommodating, serviceable. Then it yawns, is bored by being so long pleasant, rumples its hair, thrashes about, sweeps up and down the coast, looking for sailboats to blow ashore, and like as not slams them on to the rocks. *Varium et mutabile*, and yet constant, too. Shore-dwellers are apt to be philosophers. What wonder, with such a companion and such a training! If the fisherman's wife is less kind to him one day than another, how can he have the face to grumble at it, he who lives in daily contact with a creature moodier than any

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

woman, and yet so grand a creature, with such depths, such powers, such irresistible charms, such vast benevolences. The fisherman ought surely to accept it as part of the scheme of the universe that even a dinner-plate should now and then be thrown at his head. That is the way the sea treats him. He ought, an imperturbable man, to dodge the plate and still be thankful for his dinner, and hope to get it more amiably served when the moon changes.

But more likely he sulks. None of us treat one another with the large charity and composure we can command in the face of forces that compel it. We are prone to resent the whims of people who like us better one day than another. We don't remember how much better pleased with ourselves we are some days than others. If we find our own society edifying on Tuesday and are deadly tired out of it on Friday, why need it displease us

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

that others betray symptoms of the same variation of sentiment? When the sea is unkind we make no moan about it. We know it will feel different presently.

It is typical of the robust indifference of the sea to what we think of it that it leaves on its shores and beaches so many loose stones of sizes handy for us to hurl. Were you ever conscious of that horse-man's prejudice against rolling stones in the road which makes it repugnant to his conscience to leave a dangerous one unlifted behind him? He thinks of a possible horse stumbling over it in the dark, maybe, and constrained by the responsibility which truly civilized beings feel for the decent maintenance of all the details of the apparatus of civilization, he stops and throws the dangerous stone out of the road. I have even known that habit of mind to compel a conscientious citizen to stop and scrape up broken glass out of the highway for fear that it would

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

harm the rubber tires of passing automobiles; and that notwithstanding that to him automobiles were a nuisance and an oppression.

An analogous carefulness helps to make us solicitous about our conduct, and chary with a civilized reluctance of leaving behind us on the great highway injurious words or actions, mean or greedy behaviours, neglected chances to do our fellows friendly or helpful turns. Such things are stones in the road, likely to bother us if we pass that way again, liable even to be thrown at us. It is not mere selfishness which makes us wary of such leanings and thoughtful to leave behind us a clean path, unfurnished with missiles. It is a preference, intelligent and honourable, even though it is prudent, for good living and a fair record.

No such preference or scruple bothers the sea. It leaves stones of all handy and unhandy sizes sticking out of the

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

sand. It had as lief dig them out as bury them. You may hurl them back at it ever so angrily if you choose. It does not care. Hard words and discipline are nothing to it. Its reputation is nothing to it, for it is not civilized, but an untamable creature that does as it likes.

It is untamable, good tempered or bad tempered as the mood strikes it, and quite indifferent about what may be the consequences of its fits of angry energy. In that respect it is happily unlike most of us who are liable to have our liberties restricted for atrocious misbehaviour, and are wont to use a decent caution about turning our tempers loose. And yet the sea's tempers and our own have some curious points in common. There is respectable authority for the theory that the tempers of the sea and a large proportion of the irritations of us human creatures have the same causes. They

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

are atmospheric. We all know about the rheumatic people whose bones ache and whose tempers creak for days before a storm. When the storm finally breaks, they limber up at once and feel better; but something in the preliminary airs—waves of ether, electrical disturbances, one cross-grained atmospheric influence or another—rasps their nerves and strains their powers of self-control. And it is observed that these preliminary distresses come oftentimes in weather that to the eye makes an excellent appearance. Fine-looking days may be full of crotchets and cross words, and rainy ones be temperamentally amiable. Moreover, we hear curious things nowadays about light and its effects on human creatures—that the short rays of it are full of mischievous potentiality; that sunlight—that great germicide—may kill out of us more germs than we can spare; that the different races and complexions of men are nicely

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

adjusted to certain allowances of sunlight, the blond races to the least, the yellow races to more, and the blacks to most of all. They warn us—the scientific gentlemen do—that when it happens, in the course of race migrations, that a race gets too far out of the zone to which it is adapted there will be the mischief to pay in the course of time with that race. Black people and blond, we are told, cannot flourish and develop equally well in the same zone. Observation of the habits of the sea makes our minds more credulous of such assurances. The sea, to be sure, can stand all climates, is left out in all weathers, endures all atmospheric fluctuations, all kinds of sunlight, short rays and blistering heat, and still survives. Survives! Yes, but with what vicissitudes of temper and behaviour! When we remember that the unseen and unmeasured forces that keep the ocean moving, and stir it up to ob-

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

streperous demonstrations, are working all the time on us too, we get a little better idea of how the perpetual alchemy of nature works upon mankind.

And what did they say to us only lately, after the raging of Vesuvius had been followed by the earthquake that dealt with San Francisco as no great city had been dealt with for centuries? "Sun-spots!" they said to us, and explained that for many months the sun had been far more than usually blotched, and had been training fearsome batteries of electrical artillery in our direction. These electrical missiles had penetrated to the hot interior of the orb whose surface we embellish, and made it hotter, and its swellings and subsequent contractions had made mischief on the lines of the great faults in the terrestrial crust, giving Naples the horrors, and by the aid of fire wiping most of the material part of San Francisco out of existence. And



## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

what of the effect of these disastrous celestial intermeddlings upon the sea and upon mankind? The winter record of the sea had been disastrous and destructive far beyond common. A huge percentage of the sailing-vessels had had to have new topmasts, and the marine-insurance companies were low-spirited about their losses. And was there a coincident distraction in the minds of men? Well, was there not? The spirit of unrest in our country was matter of constant remark. Here in America, in Europe, in Asia the old order has been shaken by assaults, in some cases violently changed, in many cases seriously threatened. A celestial disturbance, a combative sea, restless men, agitation of the nations—they have all come together. Maybe there was more in the venerable science of astrology than we incredulous moderns suspect. If the sea has not like passions with ours, at least its emotions

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

may possibly be traced to the same remote celestial causes as some of ours.

No doubt consideration of the impulsiveness of the sea may lawfully breed in us increased respect for such a measure of self-control as men have attained. We do behave ourselves, after a fashion, even when there is an exasperating surplus of short rays in the sunlight. We do not run amuck, even though our own rheumatic bones ache and our sciatical neighbour has jumping pains. That is because we are sentient creatures, and the sea is not. We are worked upon by all the strains and stimulants that coerce the sea, but though we are affected we are not quite coerced. There is a counter-force inside of us. We think. The sea, in spite of its idiosyncrasies, is the greatest tool in the world; the better tool because it is unintelligent. The power to think makes creatures more efficient, but after they have learned to think, you have

to let them think. A certain proportion of them are bound to want to think for themselves and act accordingly, and immediately that happens their usefulness as tools is impaired, in spite of the development of their efficiency. The first-fruit of independent thought is tumult. The later fruit, in favourable instances, is civilization. The process of developing men from the condition of tools to the condition of thinking units is perpetually going on in the world, with inevitable resulting disturbance. The great wholesale example of it just now is Russia, but all over the globe the same process is on exhibition in its various stages. An appalling job it is, the most consoling thought about it being that it seems to be the chief end of mundane existence; the work to which humanity is geared, and to the gradual accomplishment of which it is constrained, willing or unwilling, to bend whatever strength it has.

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

Let us be thankful that we have not got to send the sea to school and teach it to think. The sense of restfulness it gives us, as we contemplate it, comes a good deal, I suspect, from our feeling that here is one powerful and active creature that we have not got to train. It will take care of itself, and we can take care of ourselves and not bother about it. It will never want to vote, never blame us for misrule, never shame us with evidences of our selfishness and neglect. Restless as it is, turbulent and untamable, it is a comfortable neighbour, as neighbours go. Really, is there anything else on the earth that takes care of itself? The mountains have forest fires and need land-laws and game-laws. The very air may be polluted with smoke and smells, the cataracts are water-power and can be stolen, the forests are merchandise, the plains are real estate; but the sea is not property, not perishable,

## THE HABITS OF THE SEA

not damageable. It is the one thing that balks greed and laughs at abuse; the one thing whereof there is enough to go around, and in which no successful effort need be feared to claim a monopoly.

## DEAFNESS

“I AM going to ask you,” writes a stranger to a deaf man, “to help me learn how to go on living notwithstanding I am deaf. How do you do it? Is it that somehow you have learned to take the thing merely as an inconvenience and not as a curse? Surely if there is any secret about it, you won’t mind telling me!”

Surely not, surely not; but there is no secret. Deafness incontestably is a bad job, and has its trials, especially for beginners. There is no denying or getting around the inconveniences of it, but still it ought not to be rated as a curse. It is only a curse to persons who knock under to it. To be deaf is to be partly dead, and to be even partly dead is a very grave inconvenience to folks whose errand is

## DEAFNESS

still to be run in this world and among the living. But one should by all means make inconveniences keep bounds and order. Govern them, restrict them, constrain them to docility and reasonable dimensions. Get service out of them even if that is possible. Don't let them sit in the saddle and hold the reins. A man may not go creditably through life asking odds of creation. The attitude of one who does that is the attitude for a deaf man to avoid. It should be his lookout that the inevitable inconveniences of his infirmity should fall as much as possible on himself and as little as possible on others. That is not heroism, nor even pride; it is sound policy. His affair, if he is to go about in the world, is to be as little of a kill-joy and as much of an acquisition as possible, to keep himself so balanced and so restricted, to show such aplomb and such consideration that his presence will cause no fairly well-man-

## DEAFNESS

nered person discomfort or embarrassment. His part in the play may prove somewhat deficient in spoken lines and somewhat over-supplied with silent waiting, but there are fair possibilities of satisfaction in it provided it is acted out for all it is worth.

After all, the saddest thing that can happen to a man is to carry no burden. To be bent under too great a load is bad; to be crushed by it is lamentable, but even in that there are possibilities that are glorious. But to carry no load at all—there is nothing in that. No one seems to arrive at any goal really worth reaching in this world who does not come to it heavy laden. The trouble with deafness is not so much that it is burdensome as that it seems such an unprofitable load. The weight that is strapped to the jockey's saddle is there for no more useful purpose than to make the race harder for the horse. That is pretty much how it is



## DEAFNESS

with deafness. It makes the race that much harder for the man. But sport is still sport. The race is still a race. Our handicaps are not of our own choosing. It is for us to go on with them and see that they don't slacken our speed or shorten our distance any whit more than they must.

It is not wholly a deaf person's disadvantage that many forms of amusement have slight attractions for him. Provided he can get the amount of recreation that is necessary for his health, it does not greatly matter where he finds it. Any kind of game or sport that takes him into society and keeps him in sight of his fellows, and in touch with them even to a limited degree, is better than amusements that are solitary. If he plays solitaire let him play it in company, in sight at least of other human creatures. There is a constant force that drives him to seclusion, but to be a recluse is unwhole-

## DEAFNESS

some. Seclusion tends to warp the spirit. A deaf man's policy is to keep his spirit as straight and supple as he can, and not to let bodily infirmity twist it out of shape. With one sense impaired he has four left, and there is a lot left in life to a man who has four senses in good order and perhaps partial use of the fifth. There is the smell faculty. Besides being useful and protective it is at times considerably cheering. The smell of the country in the spring, the smell of the land after a summer shower, the smell of the woods in the fall gratefully excite and inspire the spirit. The smell of flowers and of salt water are very good. All the good natural smells help the deaf man to keep himself in conceit with Earth, though they don't make up to him for the loss of the sounds of nature, the singing of birds, the wind in the trees, the wash of the waves on the sea-shore. Smell is least among the senses, but it is an

## DEAFNESS

asset worth considering when one's proper total of assets is impaired.

Sight means almost the difference between helplessness and power. It means reading, work, the capacity to make one's living and to feed one's mind. One would say it meant everything were there not cases where life has been made profitable without either hearing or sight. It is the mind, and not any sense or senses, that is everything.

As for taste, it means that even a deaf man may take pleasure in his meals, and that is important, for meals are of such constant and frequent recurrence that it must be a serious misfortune not to find some pleasure in mere food. The sense of feeling is of course a good asset, though deaf people don't develop it in the degree that some blind people do. And there is sleep. Deaf people who are lucky enough not to have noises in their heads have an advantage as sleepers, and commonly

## DEAFNESS

profit by it, and a good sleeper has a third of all his time profitably disposed of.

Now the advantage of deafness, in so far as a detrimental thing can have an advantage, is that it favours concentration. The mind keeps going all the time, and provided it is directed by a strong enough will and supported by a sound enough body there may be a certain profit in that freedom from interruption which it gains by working in a silent world. They say that Mr. Thomas Edison, the inventor, is pretty deaf and minds it very little. If that is true it must be because his mind is constantly working to some definite purpose. Presumably it is never left to prey upon itself. It never rides. It is always driven and driven pretty hard. Of course it is an exceptional mind. But still the great problem for any deaf man is to govern what mind he has, and keep it as busy as possible in the most profitable employment

## DEAFNESS

it is fit for. If he can tire it out every day to fairly good purpose it won't tire him out by idle and harassing reflections. Work is the great palliation of his infirmity, and his work has got to be of a rather exceptional sort, for deafness shuts him off from very many of the ordinary occupations. Persons whose deafness comes to them so early in life as to determine their choice of work have a great advantage over those who follow a calling in which hearing is essential. That was one trouble with Beethoven. He had risked all he had in music. When his deafness came it brought inaction and despair.

But for most persons perpetual work in waking hours doesn't do, and the deaf man who tries it is apt to come to grief. His nerves wear out, he grows sad and irritable, his powers of mind sag, and he tends to become a grief to himself and bad company for even the kindest of his fellows. He must have some little fun

## DEAFNESS

every day, and some human society, if he is to get on as well as he ought. Lucky indeed for him if he has folks about him, folks who take trouble for him, supplement him, eat with him, talk with him, who share indeed the weight of his infirmity, from whom he does ask odds, but gives service back and gratitude, and trusts finally to love to make all odds even. Some human company is almost indispensable, but not too much, for a considerable measure of solitude is restful to a deaf man and good for him. Reading must be his greatest recreation. That takes him out of his environment and out of himself and gives him new thoughts, but he also needs, even more than hearing people, the solace of domestic life. Babies are good company for him, for they rarely say anything that is essential to hear. Games are good for him—golf, billiards, cards, any game that is distracting and recreative, and keeps

## DEAFNESS

him in touch, however imperfectly, with human beings. He will do well, *she* will do especially well to take due interest in personal appearance. Hearing people take a vast interest in clothes. Deaf people may deck themselves out with even more propriety, for inasmuch as their social performance is bound to be defective, it behooves them to make their social appearance as attractive as they may.

The ingenuity of man has contrived a variety of instruments by the use of which deaf people may hear better. There are hearing-horns, great and small; fan-shaped things by which an attentive mind can gather sounds through the teeth; tubes through which persons not deaf to an egregious excess may get the conversation of a single person with certainty and ease. They are all unsightly, inconvenient, and objectionable, but any of them that really helps hearing is far

## DEAFNESS

better than unmitigated deafness. Hearing persons, as a rule, don't like to talk loud. Many of them can't talk loud—their voices don't carry. Moreover, loud talking is a nuisance in company, rasps throats and nerves, and curries most of the bloom off the conversational peach. It pays a deaf person, who is deaf enough, to use any hearing-instrument that will help him. The fact that he has it and hangs it out is itself very useful, because it advertises his infirmity. If one is deaf it is far better to be known to be deaf, for a recognized defect in hearing excites much less prejudice than a suspected defect in sense. There is a sufficient number of people who can talk into tubes so as to be heard, and without embarrassment, and can say good things. These persons are the salt of the deaf man's earth; so much so that he is in danger of cultivating their society with too much zeal. He runs to intimacies. That is a



## DEAFNESS

natural result of his condition. Affection makes an atmosphere that is restful and healing. Everyone profits by such an atmosphere, but deaf people especially, because they are more subject to irritation than the common run of people who hear better. A lot of things tend to make them cross. What we hear, provided we hear normally, constantly qualifies the conclusions that we base on the testimony of our eyes alone. To see disputes and not know the rights of them, and to have to sit passive without taking a hand, is irritating; to get angry and use bad words which are based on misapprehension and are not justified is mortifying; to see the pool troubled and not be able to get in is trying to the philosophy. But philosophy should be the deaf man's strong point. He should be absolutely good-humoured—as no deaf man ever is—and absolutely patient and resolute in refusing to be irritated by any-

## DEAFNESS

thing he can't help. Finding himself defective in all these important requirements he must still aspire and endeavour daily toward a better command of them.

He ought to be pious-minded. There is nothing in deafness that can hinder him from knowing just as much about his Maker as anyone else does, or from profiting as fully as anyone else by his knowledge. There are people—a good many of them—from whose minds the thought of God, the sense of His presence, His power, His will, is seldom absent. There is solace, strength, and companionship in that condition. I would not have a deaf man sit down under the conclusion that it is God's will that he should be deaf, for I doubt if it is; but he may assure himself that his deafness accords somehow with God's justice, and that it is God's will that, being deaf, he should make the best of it, and should still be sane and sweet and stout-hearted. There

## DEAFNESS

are lots of bunkers in the big links of life. Deafness is only one of them and is far from being the worst. It is for theologians to settle who put them there, and we may guess, if we like, that it was the Adversary. But we all agree—theologians and everyone—that, being in a bunker, one's duty is to work out.

A deaf man who really wants to be good has it in his favour that there are a number of sinful or inexpedient things that he cannot do to advantage. Politics is full of dangerous solicitations, but he can hardly be a leader in politics, so he is quit of most of the risks of it. He cannot play poker to good advantage, though he can buy stocks; he cannot flirt, unless, indeed, he is a resolute adventurer and learns to read the lips; he is so badly handicapped in general society that there is little chance that his head will be turned by social success, or his energies wasted in a chase after it. He has even

## DEAFNESS

a greater incentive to be temperate than most men have, for carousals are dull sport to a deaf man. To be sure, speculation and avarice are open to him, and perhaps avarice is as good a sin as he can take up with if he must cultivate any, for a decent share of riches may help his case a good deal, and it is interesting to hoard and make heirs respectful. But it is unwise of him to be much of a sinner, because he is so much exposed to his own society and will be so much inconvenienced by having to associate with an unworthy person whom he cannot respect. He had better be good. He may be virtuous and still not happy—whatever the copybooks declare—but certainly, being deaf, he has a great deal better chance to be happy by sticking close to virtue than by trying to be successfully wicked.

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

“THERE are losses, of course, about a detached condition such as our club fosters. We are out of the running for what the world calls its great prizes. Nevertheless, there are great compensations. The philosophic calm of an atmosphere where the worst has happened is wonderfully favourable to dispassionate observation and reflection. Interests in our club project to an unusual extent beyond the material concerns of life and its every-day business. The indifference to money is remarkable. To have enough is, of course, desirable, and no one spares effort to achieve that, but there is great brotherliness in our little community; almost a common purse, dipped into often to help families. None of us being

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

in society, none of us have urgent use for more money than the modest comforts of our existence call for; and all of us dread, usually out of our experience, the pinches and temptations of extravagance. It has impressed me to learn what interests are still possible in life shut off from the usual social incentives and aspirations, but the truth is that life itself is an enormously interesting condition, especially when you are so placed that you can see it with a proper perspective. The management of the great universe, the march of science and the steady growth of knowledge, the immense mass of knowledge not yet attained, the fate of the nations and the fluctuating movement of masses of people toward wiser living, and larger liberty, and then the great beyond with its strange, nebulous possibilities, but not a whit more strange than the realities we know—life never can be dull while the mind keeps its powers

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

and has these boundless fields in which to test them.

“But our great good fortune is that we have the little invaluable things that make for serenity and health of mind; fellowship and human society; plenty to observe, plenty to do, chances to be useful, time to read and time to think and fit minds to swap thoughts with. And we have curious points of contact with the great outside world, and our club’s exclusiveness might be modified if we chose. But we do not choose, and were never less disposed to than now, when our list of eligibles to be considered is a good deal longer than usual, and when there are such curious possibilities of its further extension.

“But, as I was saying, I can best do my errand by giving you such an understanding of the club that you can judge whether or not you care to join it, by telling you how I came to join it myself.

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

“I don’t know that you remember. There are so many such cases in the newspapers, besides ten times as many that never get out. But, after all, what do you care about it, and why should I be at pains to record an expiated offence! It is indelicate as well as unprofitable to intrude such matters upon notice. Confession at the proper time, and when conscience, or even necessity, compels it, eases the soul, but the habit of expounding one’s past delinquencies neither helps the soul nor makes for self-respect. Let the sore heal if it will. At any rate, healed or open, keep it out of sight.

“One day I came out of the great gate, and turned and looked up and saw the front of Copper John, the back of whose regimentals I had looked upon morning, noon, and night for so many weary months. There was no one at the gate to meet me, but that was because I preferred it to be so. A train rolled in from



## THE QUONDAM CLUB

the West as I stood there. With my ticket to New York already in my pocket I crossed the street and boarded it. On it rolled again out of the queer old covered station, and from the car window I got a last glimpse of the long, high walls, the barred windows and the grim mass of gray buildings that had been my habitation.

“Cousin John met me at the station in New York (we had arranged that) and took me home in a cab. Aunt Cecilia looked me over with a grave, kind, questioning scrutiny, but with hardly a word, until presently her eyes filled and she put her arms around my neck and kissed me. Then she held my hand while we talked. Dear soul, it was evident that she had wondered what sort of a creature was coming back. A human creature still, she seemed to find, and then she left no barriers up, but was ready, so far as lay in her, to go on as in days past. Of

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

course that was grateful to my spirit, but still not very unexpected, for I knew the lines on which Aunt Cecilia was built. But I also knew the situation and had no delusions as to my future place in the world or the need that my orbit should not cut her's too often.

“John gave me a thin packet of letters. They were from a few old friends, and, of course, they were kind, for no one would write unkind letters to such a man as I at such a time. One offered me employment. The truth is there were one or two extenuating circumstances about my predicament of which one or two persons knew. I had been justly enough dealt with, so far as the law went, but it was a very tangled web that I got caught in, and it had not caught me alone. Half a dozen of us were mixed up in an intricate game of business. It went wrong and we made desperate efforts to save it. Either our judgments became impaired, or we

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

were ill advised, for taking business necessity as our first law and trying to do what was 'necessary,' it came about that we overstepped the faint line that runs tortuously between what is lawful business and what is a statutory crime, and I, as I say, was caught. By going on the witness stand I could not indeed have cleared myself, but I could have mitigated my situation, and commended myself to the favour of the Court. The whole story did not come out in the evidence. What concerned me was true, but what concerned others was also true, and with the help of my testimony it could have been proved. The prosecuting officer knew it, and, of course, he tried to get from me the testimony he wanted. Justice would be helped, he pointed out, if I took the stand, and my own sentence would be modified and perhaps suspended. But I could not feel that in this particular case the ends of justice were ends that it was coercively

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

incumbent upon me to promote. If I held my tongue, justice would at least fare better than I should, for she would get me anyhow. And if I testified, men no worse than I, my own familiars, would sink into the pitch that already held me.

“I could not do that. It was out of the question. It was dishonour offered blunt end to. It is only the thin end—so thin as hardly to be recognized for what it is—that is dangerous to a man of decent instincts. Sitting among the fragments of a shattered reputation, it was still consoling to me to believe that men no better than I were perhaps worth shielding. Anyhow, I held my tongue, and the worthy district attorney, somewhat disconcerted, had to make the best of it. My reticence cost me a good many additional months of confinement, but it helped very much to make my own company tolerable to me. And that was important, for though there

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

was plenty of good enough company up there, the customs of the place made any sort of selection difficult.

“Of several men who were affected by the reticence I have mentioned, one had prospered so remarkably in boom times, and grown so very rich, that it would never have done at all for him to show any sign that he realized an obligation to me. From his point of view, it would have been to invite blackmail, and prosperity had doubtless made him timid. I presume he expected to hear from me, and perhaps he is still waiting and still apprehensive. The others, too, were naturally disposed to await developments—all but Charley Carstairs. One of my letters was from him. ‘Dear Tom,’ he had written, ‘by my calculations it is most time you came back. I have been saving a job for you here. When you are ready, come and see me about it.’ The address he gave was near the North

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

River, between Washington and Union squares.

“Another note read: ‘Mr. Thomas Patterson may get information of interest, and to his probable advantage, by calling at No. 39 Jefferson Place at five o’clock on Friday afternoon, and asking for Theodore Hazelton.’

“The next day I went over to see Carstairs. In so far as concerned his relations with me, I found him exactly where I had left him, except that his old regard for me seemed to be stimulated by a sense of obligation. He had been prospered and had a good business. He showed me a desk which he said was to be mine; told me something of the work that was to be done at it, and named a salary comfortably sufficient for my maintenance as a single man. ‘I need you here, Tom,’ he said. ‘You will be worth to me all I pay you, and there will be chances presently for you to make more money. You

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

have had troubles enough, and you will have vexations enough in life, without being harassed by poverty.'

"Carstairs' offices looked out on the water-front. I liked that. The region was unfamiliar to me and remote from Wall Street, so that I would not be constantly testing the memories of old acquaintances, and that was an advantage. I determined to find rooms over in that part of the town, and live as well as work there.

"The next day was Friday. I had errands to do, and did them, for to tell the truth my garb was out of fashion. But in due time I went to find No. 39 Jefferson Place. I had not recognized the number, but when I came to the place I knew it well. It is one of the oddest, quietest, and most unobtrusive eating-places in New York, with an old, dingy, seasoned bar-room restaurant on the ground floor. No one was in it at that hour except the bar-

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

keeper. I asked for Mr. Hazelton, sat down and lighted a cigarette. Presently a gentleman came in, spoke to the bar-keeper, and then came over, said he was Mr. Hazelton, and shook hands with me. 'I am going to have a cup of tea,' he said. 'Will you join me in that, or will you have a drink?'

"I said tea. The barkeeper ordered it.

"Mr. Hazelton seemed about fifty-five years old, a good-looking, well-dressed man with a clean-shaven face and a good colour. I regarded him with much interest, for I had speculated a good deal on what sort of person it would be that wanted to make an appointment with a man newly come to town from the place I had left. I could not imagine his business with me, and I was prepared to see anything from a bunco-steerer to a parson. He was much more like a parson than a bunco-steerer, and yet he wasn't a parson. But he was a thoroughly reputable-look-



## THE QUONDAM CLUB

ing man, with a certain blithe quality about him; a man fit to pass the plate at old Trinity, and with an engaging address.

“‘You are much better known to me,’ he said, ‘than I to you. I have been deputized to invite you to join the Quondam Club.’

“‘To join a club?’ said I. ‘Invite *me* to join a club? Are you quite sure you have got the right man?’

“‘Quite sure,’ said he. ‘You will find agreeable social relations somewhat difficult to cultivate if you settle down again, as I presume you will, in New York. It has been thought that the Quondam Club would be useful to you, and that you would be an acceptable member of it.’

“‘You surprise me very much,’ said I. ‘I never heard of such a club, and, of course, I had counted all clubs as things past for me. Please tell me more about it.’

“‘Its purpose is to enable certain fit men who, for one reason or another, pre-

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

fer to live a little apart from the world, to command some of the reasonable and sober pleasures that help to make life worth living. Now, Mr. Patterson, tell me: Whom do you expect to associate with in these coming years in this town?’

“The tea was brought, and he poured it out.

“‘I see,’ said I, ‘that you have met, and perhaps solved, a problem which I recognize. But for me it is still a problem. I don’t expect to have associates, except chance ones from day to day, and a very few old friends.’

“‘I think you will find it very advantageous and helpful to have some place where you will stand absolutely on an equality with the men you meet.’

“‘No doubt, if I meet the right sort of men.’

“‘You will meet them, I think. At any rate, I shall try to persuade you to make the experiment.’

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

"I lit another cigarette.

"‘Mr. Hazelton,’ said I, ‘I would like to know more of the Quondam Club.’

"‘Dine with me there on Sunday night, then.’

"I said I would, and he gave me an address.

"Thither I went at dusk on Sunday evening and found a big, old-fashioned house on a corner, on one of the lower squares of the city. It was early spring and the trees in the square were just beginning to put out leaves. The grass was already green. The clock in a church tower struck seven as I went up the steps. The square is on the borderland of gentility. On one side of it are fine old dwellings in which still dwell people of fortune and quality. But running back from the other side of it is a great network of streets where poorer people live in small houses and tenements; a population which uses the square as its park.

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

“A negro servant let me in. Asking for Mr. Hazelton, I stopped at the coat-room and left my overcoat. My feelings were very mixed. During the period when I could not choose my company I had, as far as I could, abdicated all volition, taking whatever, and whoever, came with controlled submission. I had aimed not to be a man at all, but an intelligent, orderly automaton, who should go through the prescribed motions of living in such a fashion as to avoid every particle of unnecessary friction. But now, with my course of life again restored to the domination of my own will, it was different. I could live alone if need be, and was fully prepared to do so, but I had no mind to ally myself with any coterie of scamps, or characterless castaways, or human refuse of any sort. I squirmed mentally at the idea of fellowship with a company of unknown persons whose quality my imagination utterly re-

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

fused to conjecture, and about whom I could only guess that every man of them probably was under some distinct social disability. Even then I could have run away, but running away was never my strong point, and if it had been, my recent training would have discouraged it.

“The house tended to reassure me. There was distinction about it. It was a dignified house, excellently kept, not without elegance and with an atmosphere of repose. Hazelton came out and brought me into a large reception room. We stood before a wood fire and I looked about. The back room looked out on a little court where I could see the tops of green things starting. In that room, which was also large, the newspapers lay on a long table, and half a dozen men were reading them or talking. I could only think of them that in their outward aspects they were such men as one sees in clubs, and that they were grouped in

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

a way that suggested the familiar intercourse that belongs to small clubs where everyone knows everyone else.

“Hazelton said our dinner was ready and we went upstairs. There was a library pleasantly lighted, its walls lined with books that overflowed into shelves in the hall and in other rooms. The dining-room had a long table where some men were already dining, and other smaller tables near the windows, by one of which we took our seats. It is enough to say that the dinner was good as to meat and drink and service, and that Hazelton was highly agreeable, talking about matters suggested by the news in the day’s papers, giving evidence of a mind exceedingly well informed about many things, and of an excellent gift of expounding his knowledge and his reflections in terse and lucid and amusing comment. I wondered who he was and what he did, and of course I wondered also what he had done, but I

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

asked no personal questions. It fell out presently in the course of talk that he was a writer for newspapers. As I said, he was highly agreeable, and the stimulating contact of his active mind set my own wits to working more vivaciously than had been their wont for many a day, and suddenly it came to me, as I stirred the black coffee and lighted my cigar, that I was in good company again, and that the Quondam Club seemed to be a pleasant place.

“Some one touched my shoulder, and I looked up at a man who said, ‘How do you do!’ and held out his hand to me.

“‘Patterson,’ said Hazelton, ‘I beg to make known to you Mr. Walter Herrick, the president of the club.’

“Hazelton pulled up a chair, and Mr. Herrick sat down with us. He was a man of sixty-five or thereabouts, his hair and mustache almost white. He was tall and rather thin. His face, grave in re-

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

pose, had lines in it that told of a will which had written its record where the experienced eye could read it. It was a kind face and noticeably serene; it lighted up when he smiled like a window struck by a sunbeam, but when the smile died out the impression that was left was of gentleness, austerity, fortitude. He inspired confidence. Unmistakably, to my mind, he was a good man. My own recent tranquillity was due in great measure to a good dinner and entertaining company, but his serenity seemed to have a deeper, a spiritual, basis. There flashed through my mind as I looked at him:

*Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus.*

“At once my misgivings about the Quondam Club dispersed. More than by the polished brass bell-button, the mahogany doors, the decorum of the servants, the general decency of the place—more even than by Hazelton’s amenities



## THE QUONDAM CLUB

and courtesies, I was reassured by the president's face. If the club was good enough for him it was good enough for me. I was sure of it.

“Almost immediately Hazelton excused himself, and Mr. Herrick and I sat down with our cigars in another room.

“‘Mr. Patterson,’ he said, ‘all men are sinners in various degrees. All of us break some of the laws of God, and surely suffer for it. Many of us break, first or last, some of the stated laws of men. Of those who do that, some are caught and some are not. Of those who are caught, some are punished and some are not. Of those who are punished, some profit by hard discipline and grow better; others grow worse and become criminals. Man's justice is exceedingly imperfect. There are always many rogues and scoundrels out of jail, and there are always some good men in jail. There are always heroic souls struggling upward against

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

heavy odds, and there are clever rascals and merciless brutes who live in ease and honour by the superiority of their wits. This club was founded by a sinner who was not found out. He was a man of high standing and large affairs. At a critical moment, when threatened with insolvency for lack of ready money, he used trust funds in his possession to a large extent to tide over his difficulties. His concerns did not improve immediately and he was brought to the very verge of exposure and ruin. But in the very nick of time matters mended for him. The tide turned; he recouped his losses, paid back the stolen funds, and saved also his own considerable fortune. The world never knew of his temptation, nor of his fall, but he knew, and he never forgot. The memory of what he had done and of the ignominy he had escaped he never suffered himself to put aside. It became to him like the hair-shirt that an old-time

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

penitent was used to wear next to his skin, with fine linen over it. He had learned that reputation and character are not identical; that reputation may survive long after character has become vitiated, and that character may survive after reputation has been blasted. For years he went about doing good openly, but still more in secret. To raise up the fallen and to succour the tempted were his consolations, and he came to have intimate knowledge of many people and conditions of existence that the great world knows very little about. And one thing that he did was to found this club. He observed that men of education and refinement—men of his own sort—who had suffered some overwhelming misfortune or disgrace, and who for that, or any other reason, had slipped out of their natural place in society and were constrained to live alone, best found the sort of solitude they needed in great cities, and especially in

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

New York. Such men he came across from time to time, and to some of them he was greatly drawn. Between some of these he became a connecting-link, bringing them together to their comfort and advantage. Finally he bought and furnished a house, put it in charge of five such men in whose discretion and integrity he had confidence, directed them to admit to its hospitalities such others as from time to time they might find fit, and made himself responsible for a moderate annual sum for its maintenance. That was the beginning of this club. The scheme worked. The administration of it being in wise hands, a club grew up which in a few years had twenty members. Before the founder died he deeded the house to the club's trustees, and also made over to them a sum of money sufficient to produce the annual income which he had been used to furnish, and which, though no longer absolutely requisite for the

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

club's maintenance, was found to be advantageous, especially in enabling the committee to extend its hospitalities.'

"Mr. Herrick got up and took a morocco-bound book out of a cabinet drawer.

"'Here,' he said, 'in the founder's handwriting are recorded some of his wishes and hopes for the club's future.'

"I have here a copy of what he read.

"'My purpose has been to aid in establishing a club where men who under ordinary circumstances would be constrained to lead lonely lives may find solace and profit in each other's company. The usefulness and character of the club must depend altogether on its membership, which is quite beyond control of mine, and must depend upon the judgment of the trustees I have named, and of their successors by them to be named. We are agreed, they and I, that in considering persons suggested for membership character shall be scrupulously weighed, but

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

reputation may be disregarded where it is known, or discovered, to be inconsistent with character. I recommend that no candidate shall ever be considered necessarily ineligible because of any past action, or any punishment incurred or endured, or any public or private disgrace, but that the true inwardness of the candidate at the time he is proposed and the chances of his future development shall alone be considered.'

“‘It is not to be expected that the trustees will discharge duties requiring the nicest judgment without sometimes making mistakes. Since the association planned is devised neither for purposes of restraint nor reformation, but of fellowship and wholesome pleasure, I am constrained to remind them that in cases of doubt they should err on the side of safety, and rather reject or postpone worthy candidates than admit such as may prove unfit.’

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

“Precious are the fruits of effective discipline. If they are good enough for eternity, shall they not also be good enough for time?’

“That is all the founder had written. The constitution and laws of the club, Mr. Herrick went on to say, were framed by the trustees. They are brief and simple, and he invited me to read them in the register in which, he said, if I approved them, and when I was ready, I would be at liberty to sign my name. Meanwhile the club would be open to me, and I could get to know some of the other members.

“I was greatly interested. ‘What about initiation fees and dues?’ I asked.

“‘There is no initiation fee, and though there are dues, payment of them is optional. Men of the group from which the membership of the club is recruited are at a disadvantage in making a living, and some of them have dependent fami-

## THE QUONDAM CLUB

lies which need all they can earn. Members who can't afford to pay dues do not pay them. It is not intended that any man's membership shall lapse because of lack of means.'

"I thought that very unusual, and wondered how the club paid its bills.

"'It was endowed,' he said. It owned its house, and had a revenue from invested funds sufficient to keep it going in a modest way, even if all dues failed. But two-thirds, or more, of the members did pay dues, and with the income from what was sold the finances of the club were always in good condition. Indeed in the last fifty years it had added very materially to its endowment fund.

"I was surprised that it had been so long established.

"It began nearly eighty years ago, he told me, and was therefore one of the oldest clubs in town. But its beginnings were modest, it had always been exceed-



## THE QUONDAM CLUB

ingly unobtrusive, and successive gifts and legacies had established it on a fiscal basis which had come to be strong.

“Herrick’s talk left me confident that I had found a home, and a week later, when I had come to know the members, I signed the register with a thankful heart. Ah, me, what an incomparable find for a shipwrecked and stranded mariner! What the place has been to me in the years since I first entered it is hardly to be set down in words. It has made life sweet again; sweet and tranquil in a way that I never knew before, so that Death may take his own time about coming, for I have no good reason yet to bid him hurry.”



Net 11-15/2

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE  
STAMPED BELOW

AN INITIAL FINE OF 25 CENTS  
WILL BE ASSESSED FOR FAILURE TO RETURN  
THIS BOOK ON THE DATE DUE. THE PENALTY  
WILL INCREASE TO 50 CENTS ON THE FOURTH  
DAY AND TO \$1.00 ON THE SEVENTH DAY  
OVERDUE.

FEB 21 1934

23 OCT 61 KL

SEP 11 1934

IN STACKS

OCT 4 1934

OCT 9 1961  
REC'D LD  
OCT 10 1961

FEB 20 1937

OCT 26 1997

OCT 18 1937

OCT 7 1938

10-21  
MAY 4 1939

U. C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



C054911410

248656

*Martin*

